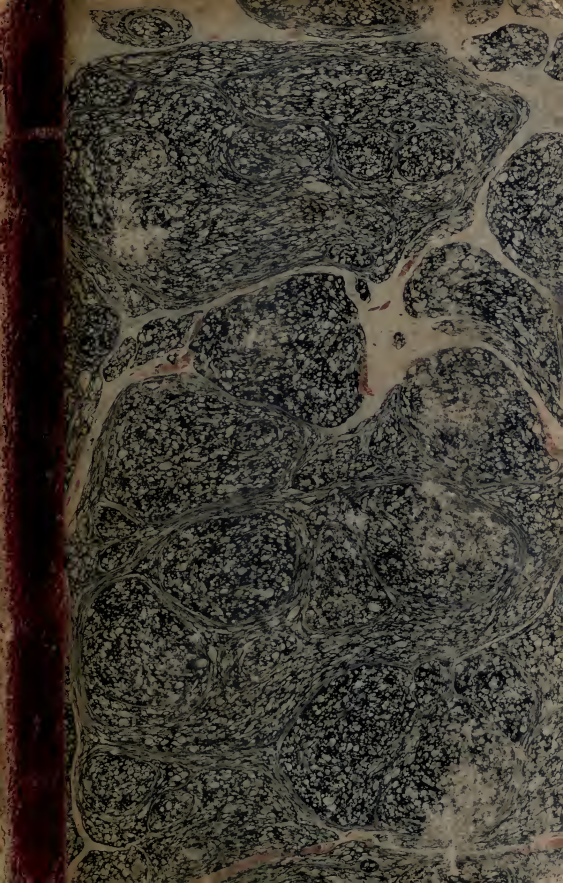




FL A/-

72.7

CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION



LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES







FRONTISPIECE.



"I have" said the candidate with great solemnity "I have made the most curious collection in the world of BUTTER FLIES WINGS . Page 81.

BIRDS ON THE WING;

OR,

PLEASANT TALES,

AND

USEFUL HINTS,

ON

THE VALUE AND RIGHT USE OF

TIME.



BY MISS PARKER.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS AND SON,
CORNER OF SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1820.

PREFACE

The author of this little work hopes
 that the lessons recorded in the volume
 will make a due impression on her readers
 and that they will derive real pleasure
 and improvement from pursuing the re-
 view of my collection of manuscripts. Should

The author of this little work hopes
 that the lessons recorded in the volume
 will make a due impression on her readers
 and that they will derive real pleasure
 and improvement from pursuing the re-
 view of my collection of manuscripts. Should

PREFACE.

PERSONS who are accustomed to the care of youth, generally acknowledge the utility of combining amusement with instruction; for experience daily shews them, that nothing is better calculated strongly to impress the truths they teach on the minds of their pupils, than some well connected narration, or appropriate anecdote.

The author of this little work hopes that the lessons inculcated in the volume, will make a due impression on her readers; and that they will derive real pleasure and improvement from perusing the variety of information it contains. Should

it be the means of inducing one child to reflect, to make a right use of Time, to cultivate a charitable and humane disposition, or to avoid every approach to ridicule and detraction, the Authoress will feel amply repaid for her labours, in the benefit she may afford the *Rising Generation*, or *Birds on the Wing*.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

A short account of Mr. Russell, his mode of life, and his principal good qualities. Mrs. Russell and her children. The reason of their journey to London. A hint to young persons respecting pleasure and pain, with motives for choosing rather to give the former than the latter *page* 1

CHAPTER II.

What it is that renders young gentlemen and ladies of importance on their return home. A Miss stripped of her plumes. The arrival and reception of Edward. A "Why" answered. Symptoms of impatience, and a calculation. Twenty-one hours. What occupation prevents - - - - - 5

CHAPTER III.

Some account of Miss Mary Russell. Why she is beloved—what, though advantageous to herself, will not procure her esteem and love, only admiration. A kind intention on the part of

a kind father.* Trifling; the effect of it. Why young ladies' and gentlemen's gaiety decreases. A proposal; how received. Debates; how concluded - - - 12

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Russell explains his reason for the proposal made in the last Chapter. What is most valuable in this world—Time. Plans of young people, and advice. Hints respecting study and application, or how real pleasure may be derived from the works of Nature. Little puss and skating. A peep at the Serpentine, and a first effort - - - 19

CHAPTER V.

What gives regret and alarm. Observations on alarm; well worth remembering. An appeal to the experience of the reader. A pleasing dialogue, with resolutions for the morrow, and an anecdote of Miss Dilly Delay. Its effect on Edward. The effects of altercation 26

CHAPTER VI.

Observations on beauty. An anecdote, or Emma and the red cheeks. The true method of being always beautiful. The goodness of Providence. Edward's frank acknowledgment, &c. Observations on punctuality - - - 31

CHAPTER VII.

The history of Mr. and Miss Afterday. Want of method and punctuality. The inconveniences of it. How nearly impatience and delay produce the same effects. An eclipse, or want of complaisance in the Moon. The habits of childhood carried into life; and the consequences. Man of honour; Gentleman; Man of his word. A father and mother a good example - - - - - 37

CHAPTER VIII.

The pleasure of sweetness of disposition and docility, evidenced in Miss Russell. Her brother; a promise; a reflection. Effects of a mention of a ball and supper. Edward impetuous and wilful. What effect one thoughtless act of an individual has upon the happiness of a family; exemplified in the family of Mr. Russell. Uneasiness. Grief. The loss of Edward. The consequence of consulting our wishes instead of reason and judgment. A mother's grief 49

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Russell's narration, and pious resignation. Return to the search. A sad scene; or, the widow and daughter. The first act of a Christian. A second search in the Serpentine. A ray of hope. A Princess, and a happy meeting - - - - - 57

CHAPTER X.

Very interesting conduct. Consequences of Edward's adventure. His relation of what happened to him. Motives to kindness to the poor. Edward concludes his narration. 66

CHAPTER XI.

The powerful hand of the Almighty visible in the least incident of our lives. Innocent indulgence in pleasure, and culpable indulgence. What we ought to consider. A review of Edward's conduct. Advice from a parent equivalent to a command. Why it is *best* for parents to command. Things that amount to nothing. An Eastern story. The history of Boomgee, or the reward of industry. Boomgee's resolution, and foolish nothings - 75

CHAPTER XII.

The true means of feeling and giving satisfaction. How Miss Russell spent her time under her Mamma's direction. A visit to the Bazaar. Why the day passed over agreeably. Edward convalescent. A visit to Astley's. On the education of animals and of children. How to remedy the defects of our nature. Study of the Scriptures. How Mrs. Russell laid a foundation for her children's happiness. A peep at the London Museum. Shells, birds, and

fishes, with hints on fitness. Mrs. Russell has a secret. An amusing anecdote, or the Naiad and the turban, with its application. Not the least amusing conversation in the book. Mrs. Russell never does any thing without an end in view. Another ball and supper. How Mr. Russell added to the joy. Projects to do good. Edward ready. - - - - 84

CHAPTER XIII.

The morning after the ball. How easily we may become slanderers. A parent's concern. A good heart will not select the dark side of character for its observation. What detraction is. Whether it is better to be feared and hated, or respected and beloved. Anecdote of Mr. Keenedge. Exaggeration approaches very nearly to invention. - - - 98

CHAPTER XIV.

A review of the preceding dialogue. A picture of Edward. Edward's humility. Mary to blame. Why Miss Hanway should be treated with peculiar kindness and attention. Mr. Russell again gives proof of his great goodness. Red faces. Poking heads. Dandyism, gluttony, and malignity. Lady Swallow. Why she ought not to be subjected to the animadversions of the young. A promise. - 108

CHAPTER XV.

An interesting visit to Mrs. Welland. The conduct of our young friends there. Mrs. Welland's gratitude. Some account of Mrs. Welland's situation: and why communicated. Every communication of this nature a confidence. Observations on Mr. Russell not having all that he likes. An account of what he did like, and why he has something else. A promise to himself. *But himself*—a good lesson. More of Mrs. Welland. What is proposed. What Mary can do. - - - 117

CHAPTER XVI.

Mr. Russell fulfils his promise. Some account of Mrs. Benfield, her son, and her grandchild. How Henrietta learned to ridicule and laugh at others. The effect of her conduct as she grew bigger. Her disrespectful behaviour to her Grandmamma. She injures other persons. She becomes envious and irritable, and falsely accuses others. An account of her Grandmamma's ball. Her unpardonable behaviour, and its fatal consequences. The first news she heard in the morning. Her great concern. - - - 129

CHAPTER XVII.

Mrs. Benfield's excellent conduct and reproof, which should be deeply engraven on the

minds of all young persons. Henrietta reproached, and humbled. 139

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. Russell interrupted by the arrival of Mrs. Welland and her child. Arrangements. The children's opinions on the conduct of Henrietta. Satire totally unbecoming in a female. A retired and modest behaviour makes no enemies. What entitles us to the indulgence of others. Reflections on hearing children witty and satirical. Continuation of the story of Miss Benfield. The death of the wounded gentleman, and eventually of his wife. Henrietta's sufferings not of permanent utility. Self deception. Her reception in the world. Her former conduct not forgotten. She has not a friend. Her mortification. Induces her Grandmamma to travel. They visit the north of England. On their return, Mrs. Benfield dies. Henrietta feels the want of a female friend and guide. The arrival of Mr. Benfield. Henrietta finds that she is no longer an heiress. She is removed to a distance. Her temper becomes soured. She is rejected as an inmate. Changes her abode. She marries; and, by continuing her injurious conduct, causes dissention in her husband's family. She accompanies her husband abroad. Occasions his final ruin by her slanderous conversation. Her husband quits her, and she remains, in obscurity and unavailing repent-

ance, a warning to all young persons to avoid
ridicule, satire, slander, and detraction. - 144

CHAPTER XIX.

Visits of leave-taking. Miss Medlar. Good
news for Mrs. Welland. Lady Swallow.
Plans and performances. Drury Lane. - 156

CHAPTER XX.

The happy breakfast. Edward shews that he
had profited by his father's lessons. Prepa-
rations. The reception of Miss Hanway.
Mrs. Welland's success. Mr. and Mrs. Rus-
sell satisfied with the occurrences of the last
few weeks, and why. A journey, and a happy
meeting. Edward's reward. A fortnight's
happiness. The conclusion, shewing the con-
duct of the young persons mentioned in this
history, and what conduct is always most
pleasing to God. - - - - 162

BIRDS ON THE WING;

OR,

PLEASANT TALES, &c.

CHAPTER I.

MR. RUSSELL usually passed his Christmas with his wife and family at his country-house; to the great comfort and joy of his poor neighbours, and the certain pleasure of his numerous friends, who found at his fire-side every delight that hospitality, elegance, and cultivated society, can give. He was in every sense of the word a good man: he had a fine understanding, great good-nature, and superior talents: he was a good hus-

band, a good father, a good master, a good landlord, a good neighbour, a good friend, and, above all, he was a good Christian. After hearing this, my young friends, it can hardly be necessary to add, for your information, that he was beloved and respected, and that the blessing of Providence attended him.

His lady was worthy of such a husband: she was sensible, amiable, and accomplished; and placed her chief delight in the discharge of the almost innumerable duties a wife and mother has to perform. Of her numerous family she had now but four children left; a son and daughter of the ages of twelve and thirteen, and two little girls who were yet in the nursery. The rest of her darlings had been removed by Providence to a better world; and though Mrs. Russell's grief was poignant, she bowed in humble and pious resignation

to the decree of her all-wise Creator. About two years before the period of our narrative, Mrs. Russell's health was so much impaired, that she found it necessary to send Mary to school; not being able to give sufficient attention to the little girl without injury to herself: but as her constitution was now stronger, she proposed, with her husband's permission, to take her daughter home, and have her education completed under her own eye. This, however, was a piece of good news that she had not yet imparted to the young lady. An affair of consequence obliging Mr. Russell to be in London before Christmas, this tender mother could not deny herself the pleasure of accompanying him, for the purpose of fetching home her son and daughter herself; and at the proposed time, these excellent people arrived at their house in Wimpole Street, where

they soon after received their beloved children, with all that delight, not unmixed with anxiety, which parents ever feel. Yes, my young friends, rest assured, that no one incident of your lives, however trifling, fails to give either pleasure or pain, and sometimes both, to your good parents; and let this information, added to the injunctions of Religion, induce you so to conduct yourselves, that your friends may have as large a share of the former, and as small a one of the latter, as possible. What passed in the house of Mr. Russell during his stay in London, will, I trust, prove both useful and entertaining to you: in this hope, and having thus completed this short introduction, I invite you to a second chapter, in which one of your young friends will make his appearance.

CHAPTER II.

GENERALLY speaking, there are few personages of more importance in their own estimation, than young ladies and gentlemen just come from school. They are too apt to ascribe the joy their arrival produces, rather to their own merit and importance, than to the partiality of their friends; not considering, that if the little lady or gentleman was stripped of the plumes supplied by the affection of others, as well as by the situation and rank of friends, his or her reception in the world, would probably be very different from what it now is. It would be amusing enough to imagine a little important Miss, dressed in a homely garb, with no other recommendation but her

own intrinsic merits, sent into some respectable family to stay the holidays: the young lady would find that she must earn esteem and affection before she could enjoy the fruits of them; and she would thus learn to be grateful to her friends for their voluntary, and, in general, superabundant love and indulgence; and to her Maker, for having given her such kind friends. This applies equally to young gentlemen.

Edward Russell arrived at home before his sister, and bounding into his Mamma's arms, was welcomed with a kiss and an embrace, not unaccompanied by tears. He was a very affectionate boy; and, after his first transports at meeting his father and mother had a little subsided, he inquired where Mary was, and why she was not come home too. 'She is not come home yet, my dear, because her governess has not yet

dismissed the young ladies. The day after to-morrow you shall accompany me to Goodchild House, and we shall bring her home with us in the carriage.' "Not till the day after to-morrow? What a long time to wait, when I want so much to see her! I shall be quite tired with waiting. I want her to be here to-morrow! Can't you go for her to-morrow, Mamma?" 'No! my dear.' "Why, Mamma? I wish you would go for her to oblige me." 'I do not always think it necessary to answer your *whys*, my dear,' replied Mrs. Russell; 'but in this instance I will so far oblige you. I cannot go to-morrow, because her governess told me that it would be infringing the rules of the house to take your sister away before Thursday; and I cannot consent to be guilty of a rudeness or an impropriety to gratify either my children or myself. Are you satisfied, my dear?'

“ No, indeed, Mamma ! I am not at all satisfied without Mary, because I expected to find her here.” Mr. Russell, who had listened to this dialogue, now said, ‘ When I sent for you this morning, Edward, I hoped and expected to find that you had, during the last six months, learned to be a little rational, and to curb your natural impatience, which so often leads you into mischief and mistakes. Of how many hours does your day consist ? ’ “ I don’t know exactly, Papa.” ‘ Well, but calculate them ! At what o’clock do you rise now ? ’ “ Not till seven, now the mornings are so dark.” ‘ And when do you go to bed ? ’ “ At nine, Papa.” ‘ It is not difficult then, my dear, to reckon the hours : you have five hours before noon, and nine hours after noon. How many will that make altogether, my good boy ? ’ “ Five and nine make fourteen : fourteen

long hours, Papa." "And what o'clock is it now, my dear?" "It is past two, I think." "Then, by the rule of Subtraction, two from nine —." "And seven will remain, Papa." "Which seven, added to the fourteen hours of to-morrow, will make twenty-one hours, Edward; and whether those hours shall be long or short, will depend upon the use you make of them. I fear that I shall find them much too short for the business that I am engaged in; and I would advise you, my boy, to find something to do, if it were only to pass away the time." With this wholesome advice, and his usual impetuosity, Edward ran off to inspect the house, and see what alterations had been made since last year; and however surprising it may seem, he was astonished, when nine o'clock came, that the hours had run away so quickly. The dreaded fourteen hours on the mor-

row passed quite as rapidly ; and, though he often wished for Mary, his attention was too much engaged to allow him to feel unhappy. When he met his kind parents in the evening, they inquired how he had employed himself, and if the day had appeared very long to him. He acknowledged that, on the contrary, it had been too short for what he designed to do : which he attributed to his having been very busy cleaning a set of carpenter's tools, which his Papa had given him half a year before ; and which had been left after the holidays in Wimpole Street. ‘ I should think that was not a very pleasant occupation !’ observed Mrs. Russell. “ No, indeed, Mamma, I did not very much like it, particularly because it took so much time. I intended to go out with Brown into the Park at eleven, and I had not done till dinner-time.” ‘ Then, my dear, you have now expe-

rienced that occupation of any kind, even when not very agreeable, prevents that most painful of all sensations, the weariness of doing nothing, or time hanging heavily on our hands. To-morrow we shall go, immediately after breakfast, to bring home our dear little Mary; and as you both grow a little rational, we shall all have reason, I hope, to reflect with real pleasure upon these holidays. You see that it was not necessary to be impatient: the time for your sister's return is almost arrived. Go to bed, and be ready in the morning to accompany me.'

CHAPTER III.

I DARE say, my gentle readers, (for I take it for granted that all young ladies and gentlemen are *gentle*,) you are wishing very much to see Miss Mary Russell: not quite so much though as her Mamma did. I assure you that she is a great favourite of mine, and I will tell you why she is so. Perhaps you would like to guess? No! Well then I will tell you without. It is not because she is pretty; for she would be no favourite with me on that account alone. It is very agreeable to see a pretty face; but if that were all, I could purchase a picture for a mere trifle, that would be always in sight, and a great deal prettier than Mary. Nor is it because she wears

handsome clothes, nor because that in all probability she will have a large fortune. The former are to be had at any milliners, and the latter can yield me no gratification, except on her own account. Indeed I never yet found that a person's conversation is at all more agreeable for the wealth or fine clothes that person may possess; nor, on the contrary, does the poverty of a companion divest our society of its charms. No, nor is it even because Mary is a clever little girl that I love her! but it is because she is gentle and obedient, modest and obliging, grateful and affectionate to her parents and friends; and very compassionate and humane to all who require her commiseration or assistance. It is for their virtues and amiable qualities that people are beloved; for beauty, wit, and riches, they are only admired and flattered. If then, my young friends, you possess the

latter advantages in any degree, make haste and add the former to them. Such as I have represented Miss Russell, her happy Mamma and brother received her on the morning of Thursday, and conveyed her to her kind Papa, who welcomed her home with an affectionate kiss; and the happy family passed the rest of the day in great harmony together. Mr. Russell informed his children, that not being able to pass his Christmas as usual, in the country, he should give them some indulgences in London, as a reward for the excellent conduct they had observed at school during the last half year; and soon after, he and his lady retiring, left the young people to seek amusement for themselves. I am obliged by the veracity of an historian to confess, that the morning was trifled away on the part of the young lady in opening and folding

up presents and playthings, till it was time to ride out with her Mamma; and that after a few uninteresting questions and observations, on the part of Edward, the young gentleman went to purchase a pair of skates, as his Papa had given him leave to do; and the Serpentine being now frozen, he resolved to learn to skate forthwith; assuring his sister, when she expressed her fears for his safety, that he would take care and not be drowned. I do not know that the next day, and the next, were at all more productive of amusement; for when on the fourth morning the young people made their appearance at their Mamma's breakfast table, they neither of them looked so lively as they had done some little time before. Mrs. Russell, observing this, said; 'It is a common remark, that great pleasure has the effect of rendering us serious; and I

think I never saw my two children so little gay as at present, which I attribute to the great spirits their meeting again after so long a separation has produced. Out of mere compassion, my dears, I must give you some rational employment for your time: indeed, I did hope that as you are both now, what I call, *advanced in youth*, you would have consulted with me, and with each other, on the best way of passing your holidays.’ “ I beg pardon for interrupting you, my dear,” said Mr. Russell,” but I have a proposal to make, in the propriety of which you will, I dare say, acquiesce. I am of opinion that, at the age of our children, all that time called holidays is too large a portion of the year to be entirely passed without some view to improvement. On the other hand, I wish my children to enjoy a due relaxation from study; and I have been thinking

of allowing them some portion of the holidays to be at their own discretion, and the rest to be passed under your or my direction. If they use their portion well, it will be an encouragement to us, another time, to enlarge their holiday; and if not, we shall be better judges in future of what is necessary to be done. What do you say, my dears? does my proposal please you?" It did indeed please the children very much; and as they were allowed to choose their own time, either at the beginning or end of the holidays, they were sent to their playroom to consult together on the important decision. Mary was of opinion that it was best to work first and play afterwards; while, on the contrary, Edward was quite sure that it would be better to have the pleasure first, and to prepare for school again by a little application at the end of the holidays.

Though he did not convince his sister, he persuaded her to approve his choice, and they repaired together to their parents to inform them that they preferred pleasure first, and labour afterwards.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Mr. Russell heard his children's determination, he replied: 'Very well, my dears, then for some time neither your Mamma nor myself will lay any commands on you, respecting the employment of your time: we shall *advise* you perhaps, exactly in the same manner as other friends advise other free agents. I wish you to learn how to manage your time, the great source of all that is valuable on earth; and I think by leaving you a small part of it to husband yourselves, I shall be the better enabled to shew you how to improve the rest.'

"How good you are, Papa! and how delightful it will be to do quite as I please! I suppose I may be the whole

day learning to skate, if I please?" "If you please, my dear, certainly; only I shall advise you before you venture on any water, or on water of any depth, perhaps, I ought to say, to try to balance yourself on the ice that I see formed in the yard below: it will be safer for you. And how does my gentle Mary propose to amuse herself?" "Why, Papa, my governess gave me a great many shells and some sea-weed that she had saved last year; and I intend to make a grotto, to stand in the nursery and amuse Anna and Margaret. Edward has promised to make the woodwork for me, and I shall put on the shells and sea-weed." "That is a very kind intention, and will be very pleasant employment," said Mrs. Russell; "and when you are sufficiently advanced in the work, I promise you a piece of silvered glass for the floor of your grotto, and a Naiad for an inhabitant." "I

think, Mamma, I can make it in a week, and Edward will have the woodwork ready in a few days." 'And what will you do during those few days?' "I shall have plenty to do, you know, Mamma! I have all my shells to sort, and to contrive a pattern." 'Very well; your design is admirable, I hope you will be equally happy in the execution.' "I don't doubt that, Mamma. When I have nothing else to do, you know, it will be very easy to finish my grotto. I like shells so much! I should never be tired of looking at them!" 'In that, my dear, I confess that you have more constancy than myself. And yet I am a great admirer of shells, and have infinite pleasure in looking at them and examining their varieties. But the mind soon tires of what pleases the sight only: I should be quite indifferent with regard to shells, if I could derive no higher

gratification from them.' "I don't quite understand you, Mamma; do you mean, unless you could use them for something? that is, make a grotto of them?" 'No, my dear; not exactly so. The pleasure that I derive from shells, arises from classing them, and learning in what seas the different sorts are found, and to what families they belong. This is a real pleasure, and when once you shall have obtained a little information of this kind, you will, I think, prefer it, even to making a grotto.' "How is it to be got, Mamma?" 'By study and application: nothing worth having can be obtained any other way.' "When I have made my grotto, I will begin to study, I think," said Mary; and off she ran to find her brother, who had before quitted the room. She found, upon inquiry, that he was gone out with Brown, and as she could not resolve to begin to sort her shells till his return,

she sat down by the fire to play with the kitten. Now little puss happened to be a very extraordinary character; she had a great many comical tricks, and was highly diverting. She could leap very surprisingly, if the hands were not held too high for her: she drank milk out of a spoon, standing on her hind legs, and holding her fore paws as if begging: she would come and go at the word of command, and with a great deal of vivacity; she was as gentle as any gentle puss could be. No wonder that time passed pleasantly with such a companion and playfellow. Mary was called to walk, and then to dinner, and then to ride with her Mamma; and the day concluded without a single shell being displaced from the box. The next morning Edward asked leave for his sister and her maid to accompany him into the Park, to witness his first essay in skating. The

permission being granted, the happy party soon set off. The morning was fine for December, and the frost intense; and the quick movements and pinched looks of the numerous individuals passing in various directions, gave a liveliness to the whole, that was highly pleasing to our young people: they bounded along in all the glee of health, youth, and vivacity. Mary, however, with all her exertion, could hardly keep pace with her eager brother, who longed to try his skill on the ice. When they reached the Serpentine, the scene was really delightful; for numbers of persons, all looking brisk and pleased, were walking along its banks to have the pleasure of seeing the elegant attitudes of the skaters, and the various figures they described in the course of their exercise. The sight of so many good skaters increased Edward's impatience to be armed

for action; indeed it was so great, that poor Brown was twice as long in buckling on his skates as he otherwise would have been; and the moment they were fastened, Edward fearlessly stepped forward, not doubting that he could skate with as much ease as he could slide. He soon found his mistake, and a tremendous fall served to reprove his vain impetuosity. Brown raised, and offered to assist him; but the offer was rejected, and a second attempt had the same fortune as the first. He had so severe a fall that he lay for some time insensible, and poor Mary wept bitterly; her fears however were not of long continuance, for Brown brought him to the bank, where he in a short time recovered from the effects of his fall. Being now a little less violent, he had better luck the third time, and he returned home not at all dissatisfied with his performance.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN the young Russells reached home, they were thoroughly weary, and somewhat alarmed at discovering that they had exceeded their dinner-hour, and that their Mamma had inquired for them before she went out in the carriage. They were too good and affectionate not to be sorry that they had occasioned their dear Mamma any uneasiness, or alarm, which they were told was the case; and though the excellent appetite they had earned gave a relish to their dinner, their satisfaction was somewhat diminished by regret and alarm. My young readers may be surprised at my mentioning *alarm*, because they may think that the little gentleman and lady

had not merited a great deal of punishment for merely staying out a little longer than usual. They may, however, be satisfied and assured that the expression is correct ; and learn from the relation of this trifling incident, that there is no breach of duty, however small, no fault, however trivial, the commission of which does not produce in the mind of the foolish person who commits it, an alarm : and really alarm is of so disagreeable and painful a nature, that, generally speaking, it is a sufficient punishment for any offence that children not *wilfully* naughty can commit. To fear, to have a dread that a tender parent or a kind friend has been, and still is, angry with us ; to feel a consciousness that we merit to lose some portion of their tenderness and of their kindness ; what can be more alarming, or more painful, to a good mind ? The loss of a dinner, or of

a promised gratification, or the actual suffering of the body, is not to be compared to it; and I trust that the knowledge of this truth (which their own experience must confirm) will induce my young readers to use so much circumspection in their own conduct as not to incur so heavy a penalty. But to return to Edward and Mary. Their afternoon was lost in wondering and conjecturing what their Papa would say, and dear Mamma too! and whether Papa would allow Edward to go to skate on the morrow. ‘I think he will,’ said Edward, ‘because he promised me that I should pass my time as I liked; and I never knew Papa break his word. He always keeps his promises.’ “And so does Mamma, Edward. If she says once that she will do any thing, I feel quite sure that she will not disappoint me. Do you know that she has promised me a

piece of glass for the floor of my grotto, and a little Naiad to put into the grotto when it is finished? Is not that kind in Mamma?" "Very kind! and I promised to make the woodwork for you, did I not, Mary? I can't think why I have not begun it! Oh! now I know. I should have begun it yesterday, but I had my skates to buy, and so many things to do! I think I'll begin it to-morrow, Mary!" "I wish you would, Edward, for I want to begin my grotto. If you don't keep your word, and finish it soon, I shall say that you are like Miss Dilly Delay, who promised her sister a purse last half year; but she could never find time to begin it: so she went home without having done more than buy the silk." Whether Edward's temper had been a little ruffled before, or he thought his sister somewhat severe upon him, I know not; but he replied to

her with more asperity than perfect good manners, and brotherly affection warranted; and concluded a something we do not think worth recording, with an observation that girls are always teasing and impatient, and that he was glad he was not a girl. There was yet a sufficient portion of day-light left to begin the promised grotto; but, having once passed the bounds of propriety and good humour, these foolish children wasted the time in a foolish altercation, that occupied them till the return of Mr. and Mrs. Russell.

CHAPTER VI.

MOST young people set a very high value upon beauty ; nay, there are some, having but few pretensions even to simple prettiness, who fancy themselves very charmingly pretty ! very beautiful indeed ! and listen attentively to older persons, sometimes, it must be owned, not much wiser than themselves, who talk about the most approved methods of preserving the complexion, and similar follies. I once knew a very foolish little girl, who I trust is wiser now : she fancied herself very beautiful, because her fond friends frequently called her their ‘ *dear pretty Emma.*’ Emma had a doll that she admired exceedingly, and she called it her ‘ *dear pretty Mary*

Anne.' The cheeks of Mary Anne were the particular objects of Emma's admiration: they were very red indeed; much redder than Emma's own cheeks, and, the little girl thought, much more beautiful. It happened one day that Emma's Mamma had company to dinner, and Emma was dressed for the occasion; that is, she was to make her appearance with the dessert. Proud of her fine clothes, as well as her beauty, the little simpleton went into her Mamma's dressing-room to examine herself in the glass, and she carried Mary Anne in her arms. When she put Mary Anne's cheek next to her's, she perceived that it was of a much more fiery red than her own, much more beautiful of course! and happening to look towards the dressing-case, she espied a box filled with red powder, not unlike it in colour. Like a little vain foolish animal, she took it into her head to

rub this powder on her own cheeks; and being in the sort of trepidation people are usually in, when doing any thing they know to be wrong, she rubbed it on so hastily and so plentifully, as to cover almost the whole of her face, to the end of her little round chin; as well as her neck, and her clean white frock. She had just completed this colouring, when the maid called her to go into the dining-room; so she took up her gloves, threw down her doll, and followed her sister into the room. You may judge of the surprise her friends felt, when they saw her almost covered with red tooth-powder, looking like a little Merry-Andrew among the mountebanks; and of her own surprise, when, instead of the admiration she expected, she heard the whole company laugh heartily at the comical figure she made. What a lesson for would-be beauties! The conclusion of this little

anecdote brings me back again to the observation, that most young people set a high value upon beauty ; and as nothing can be more pleasing than to gratify others, I will tell them the method of being always beautiful in the eyes of the best judges, the good and the worthy ; it is to be always satisfied with their own conduct : they will then, of course, always be good-humoured. This gives a certain expression and animation to the countenance, that makes even the plainest features agreeable. Ill humour, and a consciousness of meriting reproof, on the contrary, will cast a gloom over the finest face in the world ; and Providence has kindly so ordered it, that those who are conscious of doing wrong, *must* shew that consciousness on their countenance. It is no wonder then, that when our two young friends met their parents, the traces of ill humour, and the downcast

eye of fear, should have taken place of their usually open countenance and gentle gaiety; or that their parents should instantly perceive the change. They did not, however, inquire the reason of it, but asked what had induced them to stay out longer than good manners warranted.

Edward immediately acknowledged that he was to blame, as his desire to succeed in his exercise had induced him to prevail on his sister and the servants to remain longer than they ought to have done. He begged his Mamma to excuse him this time, and promised to be more punctual in future.

‘I am rejoiced, my dear, to hear you make that promise,’ said Mr. Russell, ‘because, as you know the sacred nature of a promise, I am persuaded that you will endeavour to keep it; and if you do, you will form a habit of punctuality that may be very useful to you through life.’

To do business with a man who is punctual, is a real pleasure ; and I think it is almost impossible to do business with one who is not.'

" It certainly is necessary for a man to be punctual," observed Mrs. Russell, " and, I think, also for a woman. At least, I am sure that those women are very uncomfortable, trifling, and disagreeable, who are not so. You remember Mr. Afterday and his sister ?"

' Very well, my dear ; and as our children are now old enough to understand and feel the true use of character and anecdote, I will give them a short sketch of the lives of Mr. and Miss Afterday.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE father of Mr. and Miss Afterday was a physician of some eminence, who practised in a county town; and being entirely occupied with his professional pursuits, his son and daughter were left entirely to the care of his wife, and his sister, a single lady, who resided with her brother. There could not be two better women than the two Mrs. Afterdays: they dedicated a great deal of their time to the children, and endeavoured to instil into their infant minds just notions of Providence, gratitude for all the blessings they enjoyed, and a love for what is right, good, and honourable. It unfortunately happened, however, that the boy was, in the early part

of his life, rather delicate, and at one time there were fears of losing him. This rendered his friends too indulgent to his little foibles, which, for his sake, ought to have been corrected; and as his sister was younger than himself, she had a similar portion of allowance for hers, on the score of age. Instead of being accustomed to attend to their studies *regularly*, they were permitted to say their lessons, to read, or to write, whenever they *chose* to do so: and as they were rather indolent, this was sometimes so seldom, that they had forgotten what they last read, before they again opened the book. Then, when it did please them to apply, they selected the most awkward and inconvenient times: generally delaying till the last moment, or beyond the last moment, what, from want of method, was rendered painful to them.

You may be sure that this want of punctuality brought its inconveniences along with it; for though their own friends, out of tenderness to them, excused it, and in some measure accommodated themselves to it, the rest of the world was not quite so indulgent. The same habit ran through every thing, of course; and they never were invited to a young party without being too late, and losing a great part of the entertainment; nor received their young friends at home that they were ready to welcome them.

“I wonder at that, Papa,” said Edward, interrupting the narration; “for whether I was ready for lessons or not, I should always be ready for amusement. I am generally too soon when I have to go out any where.”

“Very true, my dear, but your disposition is perhaps as much too impetuous, as Master Afterday’s was too slow and

indolent. The two extremes, as you may observe yourself, lead to the same results; want of punctuality. You pursued your skating to-day so eagerly, that you did not come home at the hour fixed for your return; and had Mr. Afterday been in your situation, he would have committed the same breach of good manners, because he would have gone out so late, as not to afford him a possibility of returning in time.

‘ With all his indolence, Mr. Afterday had a taste for books, as well as for the sciences, and grew up with what is called a studious disposition. His sister very much resembled him in this particular, and had a great love for astronomy. It happened, once upon a time, that there was a remarkably beautiful eclipse of the moon, which the brother and sister proposed to see from a window in their own house. As the eclipse was

not to begin till near midnight, these young persons were desired by their parents to lie down during the evening, and to be called by the maid at the time the immersion commenced. With this they complied, and the maid, who was instructed to call them at a quarter before twelve, was punctual in obeying the commands she had received. Mr. Afterday replied to her knock at his door, that he was coming immediately; and his sister bid her come in, and reach her a cloak. She reached the cloak, and she stood with it on her arm, waiting till the young lady should please to rise. ‘Are you sure, Jane, that you looked at the clock? I can be up in a moment, as I am ready dressed, and it is too cold to wait long! Is my brother gone yet? I shall be time enough if I lie a little longer!’ It was thus she, at intervals, addressed Jane, who was so used to her

habit of trifling and procrastination, that she did not consider it at all surprising. Time slipped away, and Miss Afterday having resolved not to get up till twelve, listened for the clock: after some time it struck, but alas! it struck one, not twelve; and when the young lady ran to the window, she perceived that the moon had continued its course through the earth's shadow at its usual pace, without having complaisance enough to wait for an Afterday.'

"To be sure, that was very provoking! was it not, Mamma?" said Mary, "I never saw an eclipse, and I am sure I should jump up at once."

'So thought Miss Afterday, my dear; but habit got the better of even her strong desire to see an eclipse. But we interrupt your Papa.'

'The slight inconveniences and mortifications that the habit of not being

punctual exposed this gentleman and lady to during their youth, are not worth mentioning, in comparison of those they have since suffered. Mr. Afterday was brought up to the bar, where he had every prospect of success, as well on account of his talents, as of his connexions; but here *want of punctuality* pursued him: he carried his bad habits into his profession, and is said to have lost a cause of great moment to himself and family through mere procrastination. A great many unpleasant things happened to him, you may be sure; and after some years, his characteristic foible becoming known, no solicitor would act with him, he was ruined as a professional man, and he retired into the country with his sister, where he is a prey to that chagrin which ever embitters the life of those who neglect their duty.

“Is that all, Papa?” asked the children, with a sigh.

“Yes, my dears, that is all that it is necessary to relate to you for your advantage; I could have added many other particulars, but I suppress them, as they refer to matters above your comprehension. But I have said enough, I hope, to convince you, that punctuality in performing our duty and keeping our promises, is an excellent thing, and absolutely necessary to every man.”

“Yes, Papa, I know that no gentleman should forfeit his word; he would not be a man of honour or a gentleman if he did.”

“*Man of honour* and *gentleman* are very pretty epithets, my dear Edward, but let you and I henceforward substitute another for them, let us say, *man of his word*. As long as you live, make

promises cautiously, but perform them punctually. I know nothing a greater credit to a man, than to have it said of him, "Oh! if he said so, I'm sure you may depend upon him."

"That is what Edward and I always say of Papa," cried Mary; "we know that whatever Papa promises, he will perform: and Mamma is equally good."

'I have followed the excellent example of your Papa, my dears, as I hope you will do, in every thing: he makes no rules for you that he does not observe himself.'

Mrs. Russell then inquired what had been done after the young people's return home, and finding that the whole day had been lost, she dismissed them at nine o'clock, hoping that they would enjoy the morrow, and not pass it without doing something either useful or ornamental.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT can be more pleasing than to see that sweetness of disposition, that charming docility, which makes children profit by every observation and admonition that they hear! They may sometimes forget themselves again, for our best resolutions cannot always be persevered in, and our best impressions are sometimes transient; but it will not be long before they return to the path of duty.

When Miss Russell arose in the morning, she remembered what had passed the night before; and as she had a choice of occupations, she sat down to the piano-forte, and practised a polacca, of which she knew her Mamma was remarkably fond. At breakfast her Mamma inquired

whether she and her brother would like to ride out with her, and visit their young friends the Nugents, or whether they had some more favourite pastime of their own. Mary accepted her Mamma's offer with gratitude; but Edward preferred once more trying his luck on the Serpentine. To Hyde Park accordingly he repaired, and with indefatigable perseverance he pursued his exercise. This was rendered more pleasing to him, by meeting with two of his schoolfellows who could skate very well; the young men made a party, and Edward, charmed with his morning, promised, when they separated, to meet them every morning while the frost lasted.

As Edward walked home, after his two schoolfellows had left him, he had some vague idea that this promise was rather foolish, as in all probability he might be prevented by something or other from keeping it, especially as his Papa

had proposed to take him some day to the riding-school. 'However,' said he, 'I only promised for while the frost lasted, and that may be over before Papa intends to give me a ride at the riding-school.'

When he again met his sister, she informed him that her Mamma had permitted her and him to accept an invitation to a ball and supper that was to be given by their friends, the Nugents, on the Thursday week following, it being the birthday of Miss Nugent, whose recovery from an illness had filled her friends and family with the greatest joy. What little heart does not bound at the mere mention of a ball and supper! The very toes participate in the delight, and involuntarily begin to move as if in preparation for the joyful event. So it was at Mr. Russell's, and it would seem that the interval between its announcement

and the day on which it was to take place was a blank. The young people, when together, talked of nothing else, and the days passed over, as Mr. Russell had feared they would, leaving no traces behind them.

It so happened, that after a thaw of a day or two, the frost set in again on the Wednesday evening that preceded the happy Thursday, and not even the promised pleasure of the evening, nor, what was still more, the advice of Mrs. Russell to stay at home on Thursday morning, could restrain Edward's impatience, or prevent him from going to Hyde Park to keep his promise with his friends. His Papa having sent Brown into the city, the young gentleman departed without his usual attendant, telling his sister, that he would certainly be at home before three o'clock, the hour his Mamma had fixed for the children to dine with

Mr. Russell and herself, in order to leave her at liberty to see them dressed, and enjoy their anticipations of delight. Mary begged him not to go till Friday morning, urging the fatigue he would have at night; but like a very gallant young man, he declared he was above being tired with exercise, for he was a great deal stronger than young ladies, who were tired with any thing.

Mrs. Russell felt somewhat displeased with the wilfulness of her son, when she heard that he was gone out, contrary to the wishes of his father and herself; but relying upon his promise to his sister, to return before three o'clock, she turned her attention to something else, advising Mary not to practise her steps any longer, but to find some quiet occupation that would fatigue her less. Mary's spirits, however, got the better of her wish to obey; she would have obeyed if her

Mamma had commanded her; but feeling that she was only advised, she had not resolution enough to sit still. When the family met in the dining-room, Edward had not returned: Mrs. Russell looked alarmed, Mr. Russell displeased, and Mary sorry. Nothing was said, and all the anticipations of evening delights seemed to have vanished, to be no more remembered. You see, my gentle readers, how one thoughtless or foolish act of one individual of a family may, in a moment, poison all the pleasures, and destroy the felicity of every other member! Surely this, in a good mind, is a sufficient reason to render all children circumspect! Who would wish to be the kill-joy of the house!

When it became dark, Mrs. Russell's anxiety was much increased, and Brown was sent into the Park to see if Master Russell was yet there, or to meet him, if

possible, on his return. In the mean time Mr. Russell insisted upon it, that his wife and daughter should dress for their visit, as he himself designed to do; assuring them at the same time, that he did not feel at all uneasy for Edward, who, he imagined, had met with some of his companions, and forgotten the time in the midst of his enjoyment. This assurance tranquillized Mrs. Russell, and she waited for Brown's return with great composure. Before six o'clock, however, her uneasiness returned, for Brown did not come back, and she imagined that her child must be drowned. 'If that were the case, my dear, we should have heard of it before now,' said Mr. Russell. 'The news of an accident never fails to fly upon eagle's wings. Edward is a truant, my dear, rest assured. He will return perhaps in the course of an hour or two; and as Mrs. Nugent wished you to join her

family party before the arrival of the rest of the company, I hope that you will oblige me by tranquillizing your mind, and going with Mary at six o'clock, as you proposed. I will stay at home till after I have seen the young gentleman sent to his room, and I will then come to you.'

With heavy hearts Mrs. and Miss Russell proceeded to Mr. Nugent's, where however they did not impart the cause of their alarm, because it was little to the credit of Edward. Mary soon found herself less uneasy; the joyful countenances of her young friends, the numerous company, the music, the dancing, the elegance of the apartments, and the sweet smell of the odoriferous plants, all served to divert her attention; and insensible to the lapse of time, she was not conscious that it grew late, and contented herself with wishing every now and then

that Edward was with her. Not so her Mamma. She placed herself near the entrance to the ball-room, that she might see her husband as he came in; but, when at eleven o'clock, supper was announced to the juvenile party, and Mr. Russell did not arrive, she ordered her carriage, and begging her friends' excuse, she returned home with her daughter. Here Mrs. Russell found a new subject of alarm: her son was not returned, and her husband, after speaking to Brown, who came home in great distress, had left the house two hours before. The unhappy mother could not conceal her reasonable fears from her daughter, that some fatal accident had happened to her poor Edward; and she blamed herself for not positively commanding him to remain at home. 'I ought to have judged for him!' said she, 'I knew but too well how unfit he was

to judge for himself. This is the fatal consequence of consulting his wishes, instead of his reason and his judgment. I fear that he has paid his life for his folly !'

Mary had one of the most affectionate hearts in the world : she was quite overwhelmed with sorrow, and wept so bitterly, that her kind Mamma had her undressed and put to bed ; she herself remaining at her bed-side, to give, as well as she could, consolation. Mary, exhausted with her grief and her exertions, cried herself to sleep ; and the unhappy mother was left with her own dismal apprehensions for her companions.

I trust that my young readers have good hearts ! if they have, they will be quite certain that if Edward could have known what his conduct would make his parents suffer, he would for ever have

renounced the pleasure of skating, rather than, by going out at an inconvenient time, have given himself a gratification in the exercise. What evils does thoughtlessness produce !

CHAPTER IX.

ABOUT twelve o'clock Mr. Russell returned without his son, wearied and exhausted, but still more distressed. He informed his unhappy lady, that 'Brown, at his return, brought the alarming intelligence that he could find no traces of Master Edward; that in one part of the river the ice had given way, several people had been immersed, and one person it was supposed drowned. That when he went to the Park, he found search had been made for the body without effect; as the ice was too thick to be entirely removed, and that, not seeing any chance of finding his young master, he returned home for further orders. When I heard this horrid confirmation of the

fears that had begun to pervade my breast, I set off myself, scarcely knowing what advantage I proposed to myself by going,' continued Mr. Russell. 'To the few people I could find about the spot, I have offered a large reward for the discovery of my poor child's body; and after wandering on the banks of the Serpentine, hardly knowing what I was doing, I returned home, to lament this melancholy catastrophe with you, my dear. Alas! had I not made the foolish proposal of allowing our children to do as they pleased for so long a time, it, in all probability, would not have happened! I certainly have been to blame, though with the best intention in the world. I wished to convince my children that parental authority was a real benefit, by letting them experience the disadvantages resulting from its not being duly exercised. Fatally indeed has my experiment terminated!'

“As we acted from the best motives,” replied Mrs. Russell, while she wept in agony, “we have reason to hope that our conduct will not be judged severely by the Dispenser of good and evil, who thinks proper thus to afflict us; and who must be, in this, as well as in all other circumstances of life, our refuge. But is there no chance, no hope, that our poor boy ——?”

‘I confess I see none! Some one is drowned, and his not returning but too plainly shews that it must be he!’ Here the grief of these worthy people was renewed; and unable to rest, they remained the whole night in a state of misery, anxiously waiting for morning to renew the search, and to confirm their sad expectations.

As soon as day-light appeared, the unhappy father, accompanied by two servants, returned to Hyde Park, and

applied to the persons stationed there to prevent accidents, and to give assistance, to know whether the body of the drowned person was yet found. He was informed that the people were about to search for it, and he repaired to the spot to watch their exertions, and witness the success of their efforts. While he stood there, the image of despair, he perceived a very respectable looking female, about thirty years of age, approaching; she appeared, like himself, in the deepest affliction, and she led by the hand a little girl about seven years old, who wept from sympathy, while she shivered from the effect of the extreme cold of the morning.

Mr. Russell accosted her, in terms of humanity and politeness, and asked if he could render her any assistance, or give her any consolation.

‘ Alas! Sir—no. I am come to find my husband, the best and kindest of

husbands and fathers! I am told that he is drowned! Oh! what then will become of his poor children? If he had been alive, he would have returned home to them last night.'

Mr. Russell found in this respectable lady a fellow sufferer, and a ray of hope beamed on his mind. It was possible, barely possible, that the drowned person might be this lady's husband, and not his son! He was again prompted to exert himself, he assisted the men employed on the river, and, after a considerable lapse of time, the body was found, and brought to land. One glance convinced him that it was a much older person than Edward, and falling on his knees, he thanked the Almighty for this deliverance from his acute agony. When he was a little restored to his recollection, he beheld the poor lady we have mentioned, lying apparently dead upon

the drowned man, and the little girl clasping one of his arms, and crying out, ‘ Papa ! wake, dear Papa ! ’ in a tone that pierced his heart. As he contemplated the scene, the thought that Edward might be drowned *too*, struck him, and not being able to assign any other probable reason for his not returning, he again commenced a search for his body. This search was unsuccessful ; no body was found, and he was thinking of retiring to his unhappy lady, when one of the persons who were skating at a distance advanced towards him, and inquired whether the young gentleman he was in search of wore a blue jacket and a Prussian cap ? Being answered in the affirmative, ‘ Then,’ said he, ‘ I think I can answer for his not being drowned : for last night, just before I left the Serpentine, I saw him take off his skates in great haste, and run up there, by the

side of the wall, very quickly. What was the cause of his leaving the ice, I do not know, I was too far off to see what passed; but I remarked that he flew like an arrow out of a bow.' No sooner did Mr. Russell receive this information, which seemed to relieve his heart from a weight too great for it to bear, than he sent home one of his men with the intelligence to his disconsolate lady; and hastened himself, with the other, to search Kensington Gardens for his son. But here a new alarm took possession of his mind. He imagined, that if Edward had been compelled by some mischance to stay all night in the gardens, it was hardly possible that his frame could have resisted the effects of the extreme cold of the season. Where there is doubt, there still is hope. He went up by the wall to the Buckden Gate, and inquired of the gate-keeper if

he had heard or seen any body the evening before, or that morning? ‘Sir,’ replied the man, ‘I leave the gate at sunset, and if any body entered the gardens after that time, they must have got over the wall. If the young gentleman did get in, Sir, it was cold enough last night to freeze him to death, and dark enough for him to knock his brains out against the trees.’ The man’s observation was not very humane, but it was very true; and Mr. Russell was but too sensible of it: he continued his search, inspected all the east side of the garden, visited the alcoves, and asked news of every person he saw, in vain: he met with no satisfactory intelligence. Excessively wearied and exhausted, for it was now the middle of the day, he was proceeding to the centinel near the Palace to renew his questions, when he perceived a young lady and her governess, with an attendant,

coming out of the Green-house, and heard the former say, in French, ‘ Pray, Madam, permit the man to bring something warm! he is almost starved to death.’ Hoping that it was his son, Mr. Russell rushed into the Green-house, and clasped his exhausted, and almost insensible, child to his bosom.

CHAPTER X.

MY young readers may perhaps imagine that they know what Mr. Russell would do and say on the occasion, for young people are sometimes so very clever, as to think they know a great deal: but I can assure them that they do not know, nor can they guess, what this excellent man felt. Joy at recovering his child; apprehension that he was seriously injured; and gratitude to his Almighty Father, principally occupied his mind: to these were added, efforts to preserve him; and he received from the young lady (who was, if the truth must be told, a Princess) every assistance he could wish for. He had even a bed offered at the Palace, but this he declined, and

wrapping Edward in a blanket, he put him into a hackney coach, and hastened with him to his mother and sister.

Happily for Mrs. Russell, she had been in some measure prepared for the joyful return of her child, by the previous arrival of the footman Mr. Russell had sent from the Park, or I know not what might have become of her. When she found her son alive, and saw her submission to the will, and reliance on the mercy of God, thus rewarded, her emotions were almost more than her frame could bear. As to little Mary, she was exhausted with delight, and could hardly be prevailed on to quit her dear brother. It was nearly a week before Edward was sufficiently recovered to make it prudent for him to give a connected account of what had befallen him, or to assign his reason for not returning home at the hour he had promised. When his Papa

thought him well enough, he put the necessary questions to him ; to which Edward replied, nearly in the following words. ‘ I remember now, Papa, what you said about punctuality, and being a man of one’s word. I am sure I have very good reason never to forget it ; for I see that your care for me, and the fatigue you have both suffered, have made both you and dear Mamma ill. Then Mamma and Mary advised me not to go out on Thursday morning ; but I am so fond of skating, and it was such a fine day, and I had promised to meet Nelson and Turner. So, though I knew very well that it would be better to stay at home, than to go out so far, I resolved to go. I relied upon my own resolution, for I assure you, Papa, I had no intention of staying out beyond the dinner-hour, or of losing the pleasure of going to Mr. Nugent’s. It was a very fine

morning, and I enjoyed myself very much, though I did not find my friends. I was thinking of coming away, when I saw a great bustle at a distance, and heard a shout, that the ice had given way, and that several persons were fallen into the water. I skated up to the place, and I cannot tell how long I was there, for I was so much interested about the people, that I never once recollected dinner. At last it began to grow dark, and I took out my watch that Papa gave me at Midsummer, to see what o'clock it was. While I was looking at it, a great boy, who had been walking and sliding near me, made a snatch at it, and ran off with it towards the gardens. I called out, but the people were all so engaged about the poor drowning men, that they did not mind me: so I unbuckled my skates, and ran off as fast as I could after the thief. I could see

the direction he was taking, and I thought if I could once overtake him, that I was strong enough to get my watch again.

‘The thief got over a part of the wall into the Gardens, and I got over the same place, and as there was some snow, I could see which way his footsteps went by looking carefully, though it did grow very dark. At last, I saw a figure behind some trees, and I rushed up to it; but I could not seize the boy, for he had perceived me, and he gave me a blow in the face, that made me fall down quite insensible. How long I lay on the ground I don’t know, for when I came to myself it was quite dark, and I was so stiff with cold, that I could hardly move a limb.’

“Then, did not you cry, dear Edward?” said Mary.

‘I don’t *think* I did, sister; but per-

haps I might, for my head was very much confused. I would not have cried though, if I could have helped it, I assure you, at least for myself. But when I saw that it was dark night, and heard nothing but the wind in the trees, I began to recollect how very unhappy my dear friends at home would be, and I was very very sorry that I had not kept my word, and returned home at half past two, as I had intended to do. Then I was in another puzzle : I did not know which way to turn to get out of the garden, and I was not sure that I might not walk into the water instead of getting to a place of safety. I remembered to have heard Papa say, that in similar circumstances one should endeavour to move ; so, though it was painful to me, I at last got up, and walked among the trees as carefully as I could, to that side where I thought the wall was, that I

might get over into the Park. I walked a long while, I assure you, but I could not get out of the wood, perhaps I might only turn about and about, I don't know now. I was very cold and very hungry too, I can tell you: I never felt such pain in my life! I am sure if poor people feel such pain when they are hungry, rich people ought to give them as much as ever they can spare to buy them food.'

"I am delighted, my dear boy," cried Mrs. Russell, kissing her son's yet feverish cheek, "I am delighted to hear so just and so humane an observation from your lips. If it were not a positive injunction of our holy Religion, to feed the poor and clothe the naked, it would still be a positive duty to do so; and one of the most delightful kind. If the poor had always enough to support nature, that is, to prevent them from actually dying for want of proper nourish-

ment, it would still be gratifying to a good mind to give them sometimes the pleasure of something more than their mere support ; to see them relieved by a temporary indulgence from that grinding care, that never leaves the bosoms of those who must labour before they eat, and who are of course dependant upon others to find them the means of labouring. I am sure, from what you have said to-day, my dear boy, that whenever you shall have it in your power to benefit the poor, you will not neglect the opportunity. But go on, my dear, with your narration."

' Why, Mamma, I have not much more to tell you. After I had wandered a long time, as it seemed to me, I was lucky enough to hear the Palace clock strike eleven, and I immediately tried to find my way to that side of the Garden, as I thought I might shelter myself in

one of the alcoves till morning, for I felt too ill to think of reaching home alone that evening.

‘ You may think how tired I was, my dear Mamma. I walked till twelve o’clock struck, and then I found myself at no great distance from a large building, which you say, Papa, is the Greenhouse. The door was fast, but I contrived to open a window wide enough to get in, and I felt about if there was any thing in the place. There was a heap of matting in a corner, and I covered myself over with it, for the cold was very great. I soon fell asleep, and it was there that I was found the next morning.’

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN Edward had concluded his narration, his Papa took his hand, and said, ' It has been wisely observed, my dear boy, that there is no one incident of our lives, however trifling, that may not be improved to our advantage : and I will likewise add, that there is no incident in which the hand of an Almighty power is not visible. I trust that the accidents that have befallen you, will shew you the great disadvantage of always indulging ourselves, even in an innocent diversion, because there is no one to restrain us, and because we *may*. Indeed, a mere pastime ceases to be innocent, if the indulgence in it trenches upon our duties, or occasions any inconvenience to our friends. We ought then always to con-

sider, when we feel inclined to amuse ourselves, whether we have performed what has been prescribed to us, either by our situation and occupations in the world, or by those who have the right to direct us. If we have done so, and we run no risk of giving pain to others, or causing them any inconvenience by amusing ourselves, we are at perfect liberty to do so. I am far from reproving your exercising yourself in skating, which is a charming diversion, calculated to promote your health and your growth, and admirably suited to your age. But it was very thoughtless, and a little wilful in a boy of your age, to go out for the purpose of taking that exercise, at a time when you were particularly required to remain quiet, to be punctually at home, and when you had been *advised*, by those who had a right to *command* you, not to go out. Advice from a parent is,

or ought to be, equivalent to a command.'

"Certainly," said Mrs. Russell; "and henceforth I do not doubt that with our dear children it will be so. I think Edward must perceive now, the wisdom of that dispensation that gives the power of commanding to parents. Even clever, sensible children, are necessarily inadequate to guide themselves, they require the experience and reflection which those who are older possess; and the case is still worse with those who have fewer natural endowments. I shall not again feel tempted to allow my children waste three weeks of that time which is so precious, in doing nothing; and I am sure my dear Mary will find that her grotto will flourish more under her Mamma's direction, than when left entirely to herself."

Mary blushed at the recollection of

the manner in which she had wasted her holidays, and thanked her Mamma for proposing to take the trouble to regulate her employments.

‘ I am persuaded, whenever your Mamma begins her kind superintendence, that you will find you have more leisure for pleasure than you have now,’ said Mr. Russell. ‘ I shall prescribe to Edward, and I do not mean to prevent him from enjoying a single fine frosty morning out of doors. What I shall principally aim at, will be to prevent your time from being consumed in doing those things that amount to nothing, by learning to employ a proper portion of it properly: and then, as much play as you please. But we have been serious long enough, I think; Edward looks fatigued, and before I leave you all, which I must do for some hours, I will relate to you a little Eastern story.

‘ In a certain district of Hindostan, the name of which has escaped me, there was a law that every man should render an account, once in two years, of the manner in which he had spent the two years. This examination was quite a fête to the people, and it was always looked forward to with great eagerness and great delight. Proper officers were appointed to examine those who appeared, to record such actions as were thought worthy to be perpetuated, and to distribute the reward of industry to those who had best employed their time.

‘ Boomgee, a person of some consideration in the district, was particularly anxious to be examined by the judges for the first time: he did not doubt that the manner in which he had passed the last two years, would entitle him to the admiration of all present, and to the reward of industry. As he was exempted by

his station and riches from the necessity of doing any thing, he considered himself entitled to a double portion of praise. When he arrived on the spot, a solemn looking person had just presented himself to the judges, and Boongee listened in silence to learn what were his pretensions. ‘How,’ said the judge, ‘have you passed the last two years of your life?’ “In such a manner as, doubtless, to merit your approbation. I have not allowed myself to be idle a moment. I have had my regular hours of devotion, exercise, and refection: these were not the largest portion of my time, I assure you: *that* I passed in the most earnest application.”

‘In what kind of application? What lands have you improved? What roads have you repaired? What edifice have you reared? What art have you perfected or invented; or what science have

you made useful to man? Have you discovered new truths for the benefit of mankind?’

“ I have done none of these things; not one !”

‘ Perhaps you have employed yourself in acts of charity and benevolence ?’

“ I have never even thought of them.”

‘ Or you have served your country in the field, and driven away the public enemy ?’

“ I never yet left home.”

‘ Have you assisted in the councils of your sovereign, and thus been the blessing of millions ?’

“ I am not even qualified to give an opinion.”

‘ What then *have* you done ?’

“ I have,” said the candidate, with great solemnity, “ I have made the most curious collection in the world of *butterflies’ wings*.”

The poor man had hardly uttered the words, when the whole assembly laughed heartily; and Boomgee, with singular modesty, resolved to make no pretension nor to claim any reward. “Alas!” said he to himself, “my own occupations have not been much more useful than that of this wing-fancier: all I can hope this time, is to escape the severe condemnation I hear of that person’s conduct, and I must endeavour to let my employments henceforth have sufficient utility in them, to be entitled to a better name than *Foolish Nothings*.” Boomgee kept his resolution, and, at the succeeding celebration, he obtained credit, not for having done *more* than his neighbours; but for having done what was *more useful*.

“That is a charming story of Papa’s,” said Edward, “and I hope that I shall

profit as much by it as Boomgee did by the folly of his neighbour."

'I hope so too, my dear!' replied his Mother; 'and then I am sure you will become a useful character. But, considering that you are yet an invalid, we have talked a long time to you; we will now leave you, and Mary must try to reduce her good resolutions to practice.'

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN people go with hearty good will about any sort of business, they cannot fail to give satisfaction to their employers, whether they have ultimately great success or not. This observation was verified in Miss Russell: she sat down with the greatest alacrity to translate a page of French into English, and back again into French, and she pleased her Mamma so much by her sweet compliance with her commands, and her steady application, that Mrs. Russell sent for a carpenter, and gave immediate orders for the woodwork of the long talked-of grotto to be made. She then condescended to assist Mary in the arranging of her shells; and she promised

her help when the important business of fixing them should begin. The mother and daughter then rode out together; they visited the Bazaar, where Mary purchased two nice dolls for the two little girls in the nursery; and her Mamma bought an excellent writing-desk. The day passed over agreeably, because rationally and usefully, and Mary found it the pleasantest and the shortest she had had since her return home. Nor was it the only one of its kind, for every morning Mary read some interesting history, which furnished her with matter for reflection and conversation: she every day studied her own language as well as the French, and she every day cultivated her talent for music.

When Edward recovered his strength a little, he found it was high time to apply to the studies his master had prescribed to him during the holidays; and,

as both the children conducted themselves with so much propriety, Mrs. Russell prepared to give them some indulgence, as an encouragement to continue in the same good course. She took them to Astley's Amphitheatre, to see that noble animal the horse perform feats, beyond the conception of all who have never witnessed that excellent exhibition. 'You see, my dears,' said she, as they rode home, 'what education can do for an animal, and this may teach you what it ought to do for men. There are very few young gentlemen and ladies, who have not as much pains taken with them as Mr. Astley's horses; and how few do equal credit to their teachers, or derive equal benefit. I assure you, I often think the conduct of animals is superior, considering their endowments, to that of men; and this I can only ascribe

to that original blot in our nature, which makes us sometimes prefer what we know to be inferior to good.'

"Then, Mamma, if it is the fault of our nature, how can we help it?"

'By making use of our reason, my dear. There are few persons so irrational as not to be able to distinguish what is best; and if they have not resolution to choose and prefer it, they have a sure help that will never fail them, if they seek it with all their hearts. I mean, the help of their heavenly Father, who never forsakes those who apply to him, and try to regulate their lives according to his precepts. These precepts are to be learnt by studying his word, and you are both of you now old enough to commence a more connected perusal of the Bible than you have hitherto had. As to-morrow is Sunday, we will enter

upon a plan for that purpose, and this plan I shall expect you to pursue, whether you are at home or at school.'

It was thus that Mrs. Russell inculcated important truths, and endeavoured to turn every incident to some good purpose. It was thus that she laid a foundation for the happiness of her children, and taught them to prefer what was really valuable. During the following week, she took them to Mr. Bullock's Museum, where Mary could not help sighing for some of the beautiful shells, which made her own little collection appear perfectly uninteresting, and her brother purchased two for her, out of his own pocket-money. Some of the pretty birds up stairs delighted her exceedingly, and she was half tempted to ask the price of one to put into her grotto; but, on consulting her Mamma, she abandoned the design. 'Only think,'

said Mrs. Russell, ‘ of any thing so incongruous as a little humming bird, that delights in the orange groves, being perched upon the edge of a nautilus! would not you pity the little creature? No, my dear, if you wish to make an arbour, and to furnish it with birds, it is another business; but a bunch or two of mock coral will look a great deal better in your grotto, and that I can help you to make. If you will remind me, I may perhaps tell you a story in the evening, that will amuse you. I have got something in hand as well as you, and as I have occasion for a few artificial flowers, we will now go and buy some.’

My readers may be certain that the children did not forget to remind their Mamma of her promise, and she obligingly amused them with the following anecdote.

‘ When I was about your age, my

dears, I was, like you, very fond of pretty things, and perhaps too apt to wish for what I saw.'

"That I am afraid is my case, Mamma. I don't know whether it is Edward's, or not."

'Well, my dear. I had not much more, nay, perhaps not any more, judgment than you have, so that I might very probably have stuck a humming bird upon a nautilus, and a flying fish upon an orange blossom.'

"Oh, Mamma! that would have been too ridiculous! I can't help laughing to think of the poor flying fish."

'I am glad it amuses you, my dear: there are many things in the world quite as incongruous and as comical as that. You remember the grotto at your Uncle's, and the sleeping Naiad?'

"Very well, Mamma."

'At the time I am speaking of, I was

a great lover of fashions, very ignorant of proper costume, and very desirous that my favourite Naiad, which was one of the little wonders of my father's grounds, should be as well attired as possible. So one day, while my parents were entertaining some friends who proposed walking through the grounds, I took a turban of silver gauze, that was in my mother's dressing-room, and placed it, in as picturesque a manner as I was able, upon the head of the Naiad. I must confess that my taste was at that time so incorrect, and so little formed, that I admired the effect of the thing altogether very much: the white feathers hanging gracefully on one side appeared particularly charming. As I afterwards accompanied the party on their visit to the grotto, I had an opportunity of witnessing the effect of my operations. On entering the grotto, there was one universal exclamation of

surprise, and a gentleman, famous for his classical taste, declared that it was quite barbarous to destroy the charming effect of the *tout-ensemble* by so monstrous an union! a *Turkish turban* on a *Naiad of the stream*! You may suppose, my dears, that I never took the trouble to dress the Naiad afterwards; but whenever I hear or see any thing very discordant, I always recollect my own folly and ignorance.'

"Ah, Mamma! how happy you are to be so wise now, as not to need to be ashamed of such a comical trick. I think if my Uncle would let us put on the Naiad's turban again, we might place my humming bird on the top of it, and the orange blossom and the flying fish at her right hand."

'Exactly so! And, as I always wish you to derive some advantage from our

conversations, I will just observe, that the individual beauty of an object is of small value, unless that object be placed in its proper situation. Your Grand-mamma's turban was a very handsome one, I assure you: the humming bird and the orange blossom are charming together, and the nautilus and the flying fish are truly interesting. Let each be placed in its proper place, and it will interest, or at least please; but remove them, and, as we have seen, not one of them would yield any gratification. Now let me see what profit you have derived from this lecture on fitness, by the arrangement you will make for me of my artificial flowers. They are to decorate the drawing-room. What makes you both look pleased?"

"Why, Mamma, the drawing-room will not be decorated for nothing."

‘ Very true, my dear. I never do any thing for *nothing*, as you express it: I have always something in view.’

“ What have you in view now, Mamma?”

‘ Do you think I may venture to tell you without danger of having all our plans disappointed?’

“ I hope so, Mamma! Pray do tell us.”

‘ Well, my dears, I will then; it is a ball and supper to-morrow evening.’

“ Oh! delightful. And shall we have a large party?”

‘ A very large party: and you will have a pleasure you do not know any thing about at this moment.’

“ What pleasure can that be, Mamma?”

‘ The pleasure of reflecting that this treat is a reward for your docility and diligence during the last ten days; for I assure you, if you had behaved dif-

ferently, you would have had no treat at all.'

"Dear Mamma, how kind you are!"

“Whether I reward or punish, my dears, I shall, I hope, be always *kind*, and I can assure you, that it is much more easy and agreeable to me to do the former than the latter. But this is not all. Mary will learn with delight, I am sure, that her excellent conduct has confirmed me in the design of keeping her at home, and seeing her education finished under my own eye.’

Mrs. Russell was proceeding, but Mary, in a transport of joy and gratitude, rushed into her Mamma’s arms. She was thanking her most affectionately, when Mr. Russell entered, and having learnt the cause of the joy that was so prevalent, he declared that he was willing to add to it as much as he could. ‘I think,’ said he, ‘you will both be glad to

hear, that in four days we shall go into the country to finish our holidays. You and I, Edward, can never be sufficiently grateful for the escape you had from drowning and from starvation. I have been considering in what way we can best testify this gratitude, and I think it will be by doing something for those poor children who lost their Father that evening. I have inquired into the circumstances and situation of Mrs. Welland, and I propose to take her little girl into my family, as a sort of assistant to the nursery-maid. Mary will educate her, that is, will teach her to read, write, and sew ; and when she is able, she may add arithmetic to her acquirements. As to the eldest boy, he must be sent to school, for the present : can I procure any contribution in aid of this plan ?

“ Yes, Papa. You may have as much of my pocket-money as you please. I

wish I had not spoken to Brown to go and order me a writing-desk, you should have had that too."

'You may countermand Brown, my dear Edward, he is not gone. It is only doing without your desk a few months longer.'

Edward ran out to speak to Brown, and was amply repaid for the sacrifice he made, by the pleasurable sensation of doing a good action.

The description of a ball is in general very dull; I shall therefore merely say that our young people enjoyed themselves completely, that all the company was in high spirits, that the toes kept pace with the violins and harp, and that the elegant repast Mrs. Russell had prepared, was universally relished and admired.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE morning after the ball, when the family met, which was not till a late hour, the conversation naturally turned upon the events of the evening, the characters of those who had been present, and the little incidents that had occurred.

Mr. Russell had always encouraged in his children a spirit of observation; he had prompted them more than once to mention any thing that arrested their attention either in the characters or manners of those they associated with; well knowing of what importance it was in life to have a ready perception of the characters of those persons with whom we have business to transact, and to learn how to judge fairly of them: thus, as he believed, enabling himself to correct

any erroneous ideas, or to suppress any unjust bias that they might otherwise encourage. Edward and Mary then met with no interruption when they commenced their observations, and the following dialogue passed between them.

E. I think, Mary, Miss Medlar is quite altered since that ball we had at her uncle's. Then she was as polite and as pleasant as could be; but last night she looked like a formal old tabby, and would not dance with me though I asked her three times. I am resolved I'll ask her no more.

M. Indeed, Edward, I think you are quite right! Do you know, that Miss Medlar puts me in mind of a sort of a Miss that came the last half year to Mrs. Goodchild's; so stiff, so formal, and so afraid of doing any thing a little amusing. Indeed, they say, Mrs. Goodchild took her partly out of charity, and

that she is intended for a governess, so you know she may be a little stiff.

E. I don't like any governesses at all. They never like boys, I think.

M. I don't much like boys, they are so rude! Did you not see the young Nugents trying to tread off the trimming of Miss Medlar's frock?

E. I think the girls are as rude: the boys are always blamed for everything. I dare say the trimming was first torn off by some young lady or other.

M. Oh dear! Edward! how can you fancy that any young lady could do so rude a thing; except she could not help it, I mean.

E. Oh! young ladies can do rude things as well as young gentlemen, Mary. I know you would not, because you are so gentle. But if I might guess by the fiery face of Miss Anne Hunter, I should think she would be very rude.

M. I don't know. She behaved very kindly to me; but being so much older than I am, I did not say much to her. I think, upon the whole, we had a very nice, delightful party, and every body else seemed to think so too.

E. Yes, and some of the party seemed to think our supper very good. Did you see young Swallow eating the tart and custard? I was afraid he would not leave us any, who sat lower down. I wonder what his stately Mamma, Lady Swallow, would have said if she had seen him. He is a great Dandy, I believe; but he does not grow very pleasing: he can't dance at all. I wonder any of the young ladies would have such a partner.

M. He is very amusing, I think. I heard Miss Greenfield say, that he should be asked to every party this winter, as he was a good subject to be laughed at.

E. Miss Greenfields all dance well.

They are fine dashing young ladies, and very pretty.

M. Miss Emily is very pretty; but she pokes her head so terribly: and so does Miss Henrietta.

E. Ay, I don't like that! It is very stupid in young ladies to poke their heads, I am sure they are told enough about it.

As Edward concluded his breakfast and his sentence, Mary blushed exceedingly, and raising her eyes to her Mamma's face, her blushes increased. Mrs. Russell said nothing at all, she maintained the most perfect silence; but the expression of her countenance by no means left the young people at rest. A consciousness of deserving reproof in a moment depressed their spirits, and left them silent and confused. At last the father spoke.

• You and I, my dear Mrs. Russell, must, I find, take care of ourselves. We

have two very dangerous inmates here ; two professed *detractors*, I imagine, by the vast quantity of slanderous matter that they have poured forth. Not a single foible, nay, not even natural infirmities, can escape their levelling rage. I confess this surprises me not a little. I did not expect it.'

"It shocks me, quite shocks me!" cried Mrs. Russell. "I did hope that I had nourished and encouraged a much more Christian spirit than I see now. There is something so ungenerous and so treacherous in inviting guests to an entertainment, and afterwards detracting from their merits, and ridiculing their foibles, that I confess it is astonishing to me, that any young lady and gentleman, piquing themselves upon common decency of manners, can act so basely." 'Very true, my dear,' replied Mr. Russell, 'it is astonishing. But I am willing

to believe that our children are not quite so degenerate as their conduct would make them appear. It is possible ——?

“ Indeed, Papa, I did not intend to be a detracter,” said Edward; “ you always permitted us to talk over the characters of people, because you said we might learn something by it. I only intended to do so.”—‘ That may be the case, Edward, but a good heart will not take pleasure in selecting the dark side of a character for its observations; nor will a sound understanding find any advantage in shewing its fellow creatures in a disadvantageous light. To do this is to *detract* from their actual merits; a species of falsehood the more detestable, as it is often fatal in its effects to the object of it, and invariably fatal to the detracter. Do you think it more advantageous to be feared and hated, rather than respected and beloved?’

“ No, Papa ! nobody but a fool would do that, I should think. I am not quite so simple as that.”

‘ That is, Edward, you have a good opinion of your own understanding, which however is not sufficiently strong to prevent you from acting as if you thought so. People who usually detract from the merit of others, are universally hated, you may depend upon it; and being more dangerous than beasts of prey, they are universally feared.’

“ And yet, Papa, you know that Mr. Keenedge, who invented that falsehood about you, is a very pleasant man, and every body is amused with him.”

‘ Very true, every body is amused with him, or appears so; but every body dislikes him, and perhaps the fear of becoming the object of his slander, may, in some measure, procure him the toleration he enjoys in society. Mr. Keenedge is

naturally witty; he has a talent for saying good things, as they are called, and being very much admired for this when a boy, he learned to consider the reputation of being a wit, as the most desirable of all reputations. I assure you that he was not at all an ill-tempered boy; but he had an abundance of vanity and self-love, which not being checked in time by religious instruction, or converted into emulation and self-respect, degenerated still more, and became insufferable pride and unextinguishable selfishness. From thence sprung detraction in its blackest form: and from beginning with satirizing the little foibles that no one can plead complete exemption from, he arrived at the *acmé* of the art of slandering, and invented, where he could not find, weaknesses or something worse.' "And in consequence of this conduct," said Mrs. Russell, "he is now shunned and despised

by many persons who formerly admitted him to their society."

'I hope, Mamma, that you do not think that I or Mary would invent any thing for the sake of laughing at any body.'

"No, Edward, not *wilfully* invent perhaps; but when you permit yourselves to exaggerate, it approaches so very near to invention, that it is sometimes difficult to discover the limits that separate them. Suppose, in order to set this matter in a clear light to you, that we review the substance of your conversation this morning."

"That is what I was about to propose," said the father; "and if our children derive the advantage I hope they will from such a review, we may, perhaps, all remember the ball with more real satisfaction than we had anticipated."

CHAPTER XIV.

“ I THINK,” said Mrs. Russell, “ that you began your observations on your young friends and guests, by an assertion, that my young favourite, Miss Medlar, was not quite so polite as she used to be ; to which you added the very vulgar expression of being like an old tabby, and a proposal to punish Miss Medlar, by not condescending to ask her to dance any more. Am I correct, Edward ? Was not this what you said ? ” Edward blushed, and acknowledged that it was so. Mrs. Russell continued. “ Now the great crime that Miss Medlar committed against you, Edward, was, that she refused three separate times to dance with you. You say this was not

polite. Do you think it would have been polite in Miss Medlar, to say to Mr. Charles Nugent, Sir, I certainly have promised to dance the next dance with you, but here is a little strutting important school-boy of about thirteen, who, if I do not dance with him, will try to say something rude and ill-natured of me. I must therefore beg your excuse, and request to be permitted to do penance with Mr. Edward Russell. Do you think this would have been right or polite in Miss Medlar, Edward ? ”

Edward was extremely mortified at the picture his Mamma had drawn of him ; but he endeavoured to conceal his vexation, and only said, ‘ that if Miss Medlar was really engaged, he acknowledged that she was not to blame.’

“ Yes, my dear, Miss Medlar was really engaged the two first times you requested, I won’t say that she would do

you the honour, but, as it appears by your declaration and menace, that *you* might do *her* the honour of dancing with her. The third time that you proposed conferring so great a favour upon Miss Medlar, she had already declined dancing again, in compliance with the request of her aunt, who feared that she might be overheated."

Edward acknowledged, with much humility, that he had accused Miss Medlar of a want of politeness without any reason. He was sorry for it; but he did think at the time that she behaved very formally to him.

"My dear, Miss Medlar is now sixteen; and she has good sense enough to check her natural vivacity, and to lay aside the almost too lively manners that distinguished her two years ago. I think I never saw a more amiable pattern of propriety, and even elegance of manner,

than in Miss Medlar. I have yet to learn what a *stiff old tabby* is; but if it be any thing like Miss Medlar, it must be pleasing." Edward begged pardon for his error; he had heard the expression used many times by young gentlemen, and he did not consider it very vulgar. 'I should hardly think a *gentleman* could use the expression in speaking of ladies, though a *mere school-boy* might!' said Mr. Russell.

"Altogether, Edward, you see," said his mother, "that you exhibited a great want of good temper, good sense, and politeness; and I regret to add, that your sister, my little gentle Mary, thought you *quite right*. I don't wonder that you weep, Mary: I fear that your companions at school have not followed the rules your Mamma taught you to follow. There was something absolutely cruel in your mention of that young lady, who

seems to have found any thing but kindness and Christian charity from her schoolfellows. I should have expected that you, Mary, would have been the first to pay attention to a young lady less fortunate than yourself, but probably possessing much more merit. She must have many amiable qualities, or a lady of Mrs. Goodchild's penetration would not have received her into her family for less than she would receive Miss Mary Russell. Pray, my dear, what is the name of the young lady who is to become what you dislike so much, *a governess*—a very odd dislike, I confess."

' Her name, Mamma, is Hanway.'

" How old is she, and how long has she been at school?"

' She is about seventeen, I believe; and she came last Midsummer to school.'

" Can Miss Hanway possibly be the

daughter of your unfortunate school-fellow, Colonel Hanway?" said Mrs. Russell to her husband.

'I have not the least doubt that she is, my dear, and I am delighted to hear that she has abilities and good sense enough to propose to render herself independent of her brother, who has only his commission. Mary's unchristian-like censure of Miss Hanway gives me the most favourable idea of that young lady's character; and if Mrs. Goodchild's report confirms that idea, I shall propose to receive Miss Hanway into my family, to assist you in the education of our two little darlings, who must soon leave the nursery. Will you oblige me by riding over to-morrow, and inviting Miss Hanway to accompany us into the country? Her destitute situation will, I am sure, create an interest for her in your mind. I valued her father highly.'

“ I think, Edward, the next person you *favoured* with your notice, was Miss Anne Hunter,” said Mrs. Russell, after assenting to her husband’s request. “ You began by a general attack on young ladies, and you concluded with, I had almost said, an inhuman observation respecting Miss Anne Hunter’s face. That face, Edward, was once as fair as your sister’s: but unfortunately for a very amiable girl, a violent cold produced an eruption upon it, which no application has yet been efficient enough to remove. Do you think it humane or right, Edward, to ridicule and even censure others for their personal defects? Answer me, my dear.”

‘ I think it, I know it to be wrong, Mamma; but I spoke without intending to do wrong.’

“ Yes! the habit of detraction. Fatal habit! As to what you said about young ladies poking their heads, and their being

often reminded to little purpose, I perfectly agree with you; the observation was just; and Mary shewed by her blushes that she put the cap on, as the common expression says. I hope Mary will amend by your satire."

'As to Edward's observations on the tart and custard, they do much less dishonour to poor Mr. Swallow, who is, as Edward said, both a little of a Dandy, and a little of a Gourmand, than to Edward. Dandyism and gluttony may be cured; but malignity is of a deeper dye. Even Lady Swallow, a most respectable person, could not escape it; but her sex, her age, her station in life, all forgotten, she comes under the lash of Mr. Edward Russell, because he was glutton enough to fear that her son would not leave him a sufficient quantity of tart and custard.'

"I did not say any thing against Lady Swallow, I think, Papa: I do not recollect it at least."

‘ You did it by implication, Edward. You called her Ladyship his “stately Mamma;” by which epithet, *stately*, you insinuated that Lady Swallow had more pride and stateliness than was proper. Do you now see your error?’

“ Indeed I do, Sir, and I will endeavour to be less impertinent in future. I believe Lady Swallow is a little too proud; but it certainly was not right in me to say so.”

‘ The same kind of pride that you blame in Lady Swallow (who is much too old and respectable for your animadversions) has occasioned the error you have committed. Check it as you value your happiness here and hereafter. I shall not again resume the subject, unless fresh occasion arises; but when I have dined, I will relate a story to you, that will, I hope, set this species of detraction in its proper light.’

CHAPTER XV.

As Mrs. Russell did not think her children quite recovered from the fatigue of the preceding evening, she proposed taking them for an airing in the carriage with her. They accordingly set out, and Mrs. Russell ordered the man to drive to a narrow street near Tottenham Court Road, where she stopped, and alighted with her children. ‘I am going to make a visit of condolence, my dears! I knew that you would like to come with me, and I trust that we shall give consolation before we return.’ By the time this excellent woman had concluded what she was saying, the party reached the door of a small apartment up two pair of stairs, and tapping gently, they were requested

to enter. On advancing into the room, which was very small, and but poorly furnished, they were met by a pleasing looking young lady, dressed in deep mourning, who seemed surprised, but not confused, at the sight of so well dressed a lady as Mrs. Russell. A beautiful rosy-faced boy and girl were winding cotton in one corner of the room, and two younger children were playing in another. As soon as the guests were seated, Mrs. Russell casting her eyes on an embroidery frame, in which was some muslin, said, ‘I am sure, Ma’am, I ought to apologize for interrupting your work a single moment: however, should the object of my visit succeed, I flatter myself that you will forgive me. I believe I have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Welland?’

The young lady bowed; and Mrs. Russell continued. ‘I have been made acquainted, Mrs. Welland, with the great

and irreparable loss you have sustained; pardon me for renewing your grief! You may, perhaps, recollect a gentleman you saw in Hyde Park? Well, that person, Ma'am, is my husband: he was then in search of his child, and I wish most sincerely that your search had terminated as happily as his. Ever since that fatal interview, Mr. Russell has been engaged in making inquiries for, and about you; and having learnt that your lamented husband was a respectable man, and a promising young artist, whose death was likely to involve his family in misfortunes, he has commissioned me to make a proposal to you about your children.

“Ah! Madam,” said the widow, suppressing her tears, “those dear fatherless children are my greatest joy, and my greatest concern. I do recollect a gentleman, who spoke to me: he, like me——”

“Yes, Madam, he like you was in affliction; and grateful to Providence for

the more happy termination of his sorrow, he wishes, if possible, to alleviate yours. Do you think, if upon inquiry you find us such a family as you could wish, that you could be prevailed upon to separate from your little girl? I will not at this moment press you for an answer, because I see that the mention of it is painful to you; but if you will oblige me by walking to Wimpole Street to-morrow evening, we shall both be better able to discuss the subject more at our ease.' Mrs. Russell then presented her card to Mrs. Welland, who seemed almost too much surprised to be able to make a suitable reply: she shewed however, by her manner, that she was impressed with a deep sense of the kindness of her visitor. Mrs. Russell then noticed each of the children separately, and presented them with a crown a-piece for a new year's gift. She looked at her own children, as if to see whether they had any thing to offer,

and was delighted to see Mary open her purse and make a present, perhaps, considering the state of her finances, more generous than prudent. Edward too made his present; and the unexpected visitors departed, leaving their new acquaintances less unhappy they had ever been since the day of their fatal loss. During the ride, which was lengthened considerably, Mrs. Russell was so kind as to gratify her children's curiosity respecting Mrs. Welland. 'I have no objection, my dears, to inform you of the actual state of Mrs. Welland; but this is not to gratify your curiosity merely, willing as I always am to do so, when curiosity has a proper object. I hope when you hear the distresses so worthy a person is exposed to, that you will feel a proper degree of sympathy for her, and a proper degree of gratitude to your Maker, who has given you hitherto a

M

better lot. You must observe, that every communication of this nature is a confidence, and that you have no right to impart what you are told, to any one but to your Papa. We should not be justified in exposing circumstances painful enough in themselves, and doubly so when they are published to the world: if, by imparting them to proper persons, we can be of use to the individual, it is a very different thing; but then, even, it must not be without permission. Do you think you can each of you engage to maintain the secrecy I require?'—The young people hesitated a moment, and then said, that they certainly thought they could.

'I am happy to hear it, and I doubt not that you will keep your resolution. Your father learned from the papers, who the unfortunate gentleman was, that lost his life in the Serpentine; and judging from what Mrs. Welland had said, that

the husband's death would leave the widow in great pecuniary distress, he resolved, if that were the case, to assist her. 'You know how good, considerate, and generous, your Papa is?' 'Oh, yes! Mamma! he often gives money away.' 'A great deal more, my dears, than you are aware of; and in order to be just to his own family while he is generous to others, he denies himself many indulgences that he might otherwise have.'

'What! has not Papa all that he likes?' asked Mary, in great astonishment.

'Oh, no! my dear, not nearly. If your Papa was to indulge in having all that he would like, you and I should go without many comforts we now enjoy. Your Papa's tastes are very good, but very expensive. When we first married, for example, your Papa had a fine stud of running horses.'

“ I like blood horses !” cried Edward, “ I wish Papa had them now !”

‘ He has something else instead of them ; with one year’s expense for horses, he built the beautiful cottages at Graysbrooks farm, and with another, the school and school-house, that affords a maintenance to old Dame Henly, and instruction to children for some miles round. Now I leave you to debate and to judge whether your Papa may derive more satisfaction from making a number of human beings happy, or, from a mere amusement, a transient gratification.’

“ Certainly more satisfaction in doing good. But what does Papa like besides, that he has not got ?”

‘ Before your Papa married, my dears, he made what was called the grand tour of Europe, and in Italy he acquired a very great taste for fine specimens of art, particularly pictures. He bought those fine paintings of the best masters, that

are at our house in the country, in Italy; and if he had remained single, he would, I dare say, by this time have had a very extensive gallery. He had, however, resolution to check his passion for paintings; he contented himself with those in his possession; and as long as the little living pictures with which his house is now furnished, continue to conduct themselves properly, he will not repent, I am sure, the loss of this gratification.'

"But Papa has plenty of money, Mamma, and he might have a few pictures, too, I should think."

'Yes, my dear, he might. It certainly would not ruin us to purchase occasionally a good painting; but your Papa having promised *himself* that he would no more be a picture-fancier, thinks proper to keep his word with himself.'

"Why, Mamma, if he did not keep his word with himself, he would have

nobody to blame him but himself, you know. I am sure you would not."

‘ *But himself*, Edward! And do you think it less painful to be condemned by one’s own mind, than by another person? I would rather that another should blame me unjustly, than feel that I must blame myself. But we have forgotten Mrs. Welland all this time. Your Papa heard that Mr. Welland was a very ingenious and industrious young artist, who had not yet met with much patronage; and that his death would leave his wife and family destitute, unless the poor woman could subsist by working muslin, which was impossible. He found that as soon as her husband was buried, she had sold the best part of their little furniture and retired into the room we found her in, and that she worked without intermission to procure food for her children. Then it was that your good Papa thought if Mrs. Welland would part with her little

girl, that she might be taught to be useful in our family, and the boy he intends to send to a preparatory school, till he can get him into Christ's Hospital, which he hopes to do. The poor woman will then have only two children to support; and as she is a person of excellent character, and much pitied and respected, I have no doubt that she will meet with friends to assist her. If by denying myself any gratification *I* can do so, I shall not hesitate, I assure you.'

"Nor, Mamma, shall I. I wish the money that my grotto will cost had been given to her. But that is so little, it would not have bought her much food."

'I do not propose, my dear, to give her money to buy food exactly, though that must always be acceptable. I propose to purchase some fine India muslin proper for the purpose, and cotton to work it with, and all that is requisite in-

deed, and to present it to Mrs. Welland. She will make dresses, and caps, and frills, and handkerchiefs, which she may sell at a reasonable price ; among my own friends I can recommend her to some very good customers, and she will thus be enabled to raise a little stock for herself.’

“ I think, Mamma, that if I was permitted, I could copy her some patterns : my governess has a great many which she will, I dare say, lend me for so good a purpose. May I ask her for them, Mamma ? ”

‘ Certainly, my dear, the occasion will be an excuse for taking the liberty. But you may do more : you will pass some part of every day at your needle, and you may work for the two little children, which will enable Mrs. Welland to give more time to her business.’ As Mrs. Russell said this, the party reached home, and the young people retired to dinner.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHEN Mr. Russell met his children in the evening, he did not forget the promise he had made them, and, after some previous remarks, he began the history in these words. ‘Mrs. Benfield was a widow lady of good fortune; she resided in a small town, where, as well from her opulence as her connexions, she took the lead in society. She had one son, who unfortunately losing his lady on the birth of a little girl, became so unhappy and so restless that he could not resolve to remain in his own house; he let it to a gentleman for a term of years, and set out on his travels. It is not my intention to follow him; it is sufficient to state that he left his little Henrietta in the

care of her Grandmamma, being perfectly assured that she would be taken every care of, and receive the best instructions that the place would afford.

I do not know that Mrs. Benfield was, as some people are, *very* fond of children, merely as children, but from the first moment of receiving her grand-daughter, she attached herself very much to the child, which was indeed a pretty little chubby-faced creature, very lively, and by the time she was four years old, very amusing. Mrs. Benfield's woman was a person of some humour, and very singular in her manner; and Henrietta, with that tendency to imitation so natural to children, soon learned to mimic her manner, and received the applause of all who saw her, for the closeness of the imitation. This encouraged her to try her skill again, and without the least malice in her heart, she took off, as far as she

was able, and held up to ridicule all she knew, not sometimes even excepting her good Grandmamma herself. This was very naughty, and in an older child would have been unpardonable; all I can say in excuse of Henrietta is, that she was never checked for it, and was not aware of its evil nature. As she grew bigger, those who had formerly laughed, did not always find themselves disposed to be made ridiculous without resenting it; and if fear of disobliging her Grandmamma kept them silent, it by no means prevented them from contracting a dislike to Miss Henrietta: nay, sometimes even Mrs. Benfield, while making every allowance for her favourite, felt as if she had reason to be displeased with her. Mrs. Benfield was a very nervous woman, and her infirmities increased with her years: she had, of course, some whims and some peculiarities, nobody perhaps

is entirely free from them, and among the rest she had a great horror of riding out in an easterly wind. I see you smile, my dears, but in this climate an easterly or north-easterly wind is considered in general unwholesome, and injurious to the frame of delicate persons. Doubtless Mrs. Benfield had found some ill effects from going out in it, and she carried her dread of it to a great excess. She would at any time order the horses to be unharnessed, if the coachman told her the wind had got a turn to the east; and I am sorry to own, that the coachman knowing this, sometimes imposed upon his mistress. This, little Henrietta, who liked to go out every day, and had no dread of any kind of wind, discovered; and one morning, Mrs. Benfield heard her in the next room, acting over a conversation she had held about half an hour before with the coachman. She

was amusing Mrs. Benfield's woman with it, and carried her impertinence so far, that the woman could not help reproving her, and telling her, that if she went on in that manner, she would be hated by every body. Mrs. Benfield felt deeply hurt, and thinking it now high time to check this satirical disposition, she determined to engage a governess to superintend the education of the young lady. Unfortunately for Henrietta, the lady her Grandmamma fixed upon, was a French woman, who could hardly speak a word of English, and whose peculiarity of accent and manner only afforded fresh food to the satirical disposition of her pupil. At twelve years old this had assumed a new aspect; she did not now confine herself to laughing at, or mimicking what was visibly a failing in the characters or manners of others, but she imagined she perceived others not so ob-

vious; and by speaking of these imagined imperfections, and satirizing them, she injured the characters of several worthy people, who were unable to guess whence the malignity could flow, of which they felt the effects. It was not that a child of twelve or thirteen years of age was of consequence enough to have repeated every thing she uttered as coming from her; but as nobody could imagine that she had not heard from some other person what she asserted with so much confidence, her tales generally passed current in the place. She now grew a very dangerous companion: the bad passions of envy and irritability often induced her to accuse her companions of pride, meanness, ignorance, and sometimes even of falsehood; and when she was about fifteen, a circumstance occurred, which sets the wicked nature of her conduct in a very strong light.—Her Grandmamma, who was very proud of Henrietta's ac-

complishments, and fine person and face, gave a ball, to which were invited all the first families of the neighbourhood. I am sorry to add, that the admiration Henrietta received at this ball, a great part of which probably arose from the knowledge that she was an heiress, produced in her mind a most fatal effect: so far from satisfying her, it filled her with envy towards other young ladies, who had their share of applause, and probably deserved it much more than Henrietta, and a sort of spite, if I may use so low a word, against all who admired any other than herself. Among the company was a young married lady of great beauty, but somewhat affected in her manners, who was with her husband on a visit to a family in the place of the name of Tobin. During the evening, young Mr. Tobin danced, as a matter of course, with his father's guest, and the lady's husband was the partner of Hen-

rietta. Henrietta's raised spirits threw her more off her guard than usual; she talked loud to the young lady who stood next her, and began to mimic the lady whose husband she was dancing with. The gentleman soon perceived this, and listening more attentively to what was passing between the young ladies, he fancied he heard his lady accused of a sort of indelicate behaviour, and an improper conduct; and when Henrietta's companion seemed to doubt of what was asserted, Henrietta again assumed the air, voice, and manner of the gentleman's wife, and assured her companion that she heard her very plainly, for she was standing close by Mr. William Tobin. Having said this, Henrietta looked towards her partner, and judging from his countenance that he had overheard her, she blushed deeply, looked half frightened, and turned her head another way. Henrietta was far from suspecting what was

really passing in the mind of her partner ; but conscious that she had been guilty of great exaggeration in order to detract from the merit of another, she feared that the real motive of her conduct would be seen through. This embittered her pleasure during the rest of the evening ; she felt that she was despicable, and she fancied that others saw it too.

In the mean time, the husband looking around for his wife, saw her coming down the dance with Mr. William Tobin, and using exactly the gesture, and speaking in the manner, that Henrietta had described. This gave birth in his mind to ideas little favourable to his lady ; he became suspicious that her conduct was not so correct and so delicate as it ought to be, and he retired from the party at an early hour, under the plea of indisposition. His lady insisted upon accompanying him,

and Mr. William Tobin, out of mere attention to his visitors, attended them to his father's house. The first news that Henrietta heard the next morning was, that Mr. William Tobin and the gentleman had quarrelled, and fought; and that the latter had received a ball in his body, and was considered in the most imminent danger. To this was added, that the husband had acknowledged that Miss Benfield was the person who had given him an unfavourable opinion of his wife's behaviour to Mr. William Tobin; and that as she evidently did not wish him to overhear what she was saying, he could not doubt the accuracy of her relation.—You would do Henrietta great injustice if you imagined that she was not greatly shocked at this narration: she was indeed completely wretched, and hastened to Mrs. Benfield's room, to inform her of the fatal event.

CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. BENFIELD was a very good, and a very religious woman, but she was now considerably advanced in years, and had not always strength of mind enough to reprove Henrietta as she deserved. Roused, however, by this melancholy news to a sense of her own culpable negligence, she endeavoured to impress upon the mind of this unhappy girl, the enormity of the crime of satirizing others, and detracting from their merits, from whatever motive. ‘I am willing to believe, Henrietta,’ said she, ‘that a love of hearing yourself talk, sometimes, rather than jealousy of the merits of others, or malignity, has led you forward, in this dreadful vice. I myself have been cul-

pably supine ! I have seen you go on from day to day doing mischief, and injuring your own character, without making you sufficiently sensible of the sinfulness of your conduct, as well as its folly. Detraction leads to falsehood, nay, it is actual falsehood ; and I do not know that a grave lie, told seriously, is at all more sinful in the sight of God, than one of these satirical laughing lies. Much humility and repentance, with great reliance on the intercession of your Redeemer, can alone reconcile you to God ! Think, my dear ! how horrid ! to be the cause of hatred, quarrels, and even bloodshed, and to deprive that poor young woman at the same time of her husband and her reputation. Oh, my Henrietta ! you have indeed embittered the remainder of my days.’

“ I did not mean any harm ! Half

that I said was to make Miss Wilson laugh! I am sure I never saw any harm in Mrs. —, except her affectation; and how could I suppose her husband would be so angry, because I said she languished and tossed her head against Mr. William Tobin?"

‘When you do wrong, my dear Henrietta, you are sure to do harm, whether you mean it or not. You would hardly assert, if you were to scatter lighted wood about the room, that you meant no harm: and I can assure you, that if the house was burnt in consequence, the law would condemn you to lose your life, whether you meant harm or not. You are no fool, Henrietta: your abilities are good, and improvements beyond your years; you must therefore, if your mind is at all open to conviction, perceive the justice of my observations.’

“What can I do now?” said Henrietta. “I cannot save the life of this unhappy man.”

“Very true; but you can save the reputation of his wife, by owning the truth. I insist upon it, that you confess how it was, and all you said, to the elder Mr. Tobin and his lady; it is unhappily all you can now do. If you really repent, and are really sorry, you will not hesitate. Ring the bell, and order the carriage, I shall soon be dressed, and, though I am not very well, I will go along with you.”

Mrs. Benfield had never in her life spoken in so determined a manner to Henrietta; the young lady was constrained to obey, and in the course of half an hour they were on their way to Mr. Tobin’s.

I shall not describe to you the interview with Mr. and Mrs. Tobin, who

were in the deepest affliction, nor the reproaches they gave Henrietta : they painted to her, in strong language, the fatal consequences of her wanton satire, assuring her that if the gentleman died, their son's peace in this world would be entirely destroyed. Henrietta was humbled to the dust, and retired to reflection and mortification. Happy would it have been for her, if she had eventually profited by so well-merited a punishment !

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. RUSSELL had reached this part of his narration, when he was interrupted by the arrival of Mrs. Welland, who was received with the most condescending kindness ; and being placed near the fire, Mrs. Russell desired her children to retire. As Mrs. Welland knew who Mr. Russell was, she came prepared to acquiesce in his proposals for the advantage of her children, though it grieved her much to be parted from her little girl. ‘ However, Madam !’ said she to Mrs. Russell, ‘ I can wish nothing better for her than a religious education, that shall teach her, her dependance upon her Maker, and the necessity of living well to obtain his favour ; and that she should

learn something that may enable her to earn her own bread. I assure you she is a very good and amiable child, and I hope that she will prove grateful to you for your goodness.'

"She shall have every care taken of her, you may rely upon it, Madam," said Mrs. Russell. "I have two little girls, younger than my daughter who just left the room, and at present I shall put her in the nursery with them: when they have a governess, she will become the pupil of my eldest girl, and while I teach her to be useful to others, I shall not neglect to have her improved as much as possible."

After some further arrangements respecting the children, Mrs. Welland took her leave, feeling as if a weight of care was removed from her breast; and the young people being summoned, Mr. Russell prepared to continue his story.

‘Before your Papa begins,’ said Mrs. Russell, ‘tell me what is your opinion of Miss Benfield’s conduct. You, Edward, are the eldest, speak first.’ “Indeed, Mamma, I can hardly bear to hear her mentioned; I think, when she had been reproved, and shewn the naughtiness of it, and had already done so much mischief, she shewed great hardness of heart in not reforming herself.” ‘Very true; and it is the nature of such a habit to harden the heart. The only pleasure that can possibly arise from satire and detraction, is that of seeing others uneasy, to say the least of it: uneasiness is pain; by cultivating an inclination for giving pain, the heart grows insensibly harder and harder, and the miserable detractor truly detestable. You see, my dear, we had great reason for reproofing you this morning! you were making large steps towards hardness of heart and mischief. And what do you think, Mary?’ “I

think it was very bold in any young lady to speak and act as Henrietta did. I wonder she was not ashamed of it.”

‘ It is the nature of a satirical habit to render people bold ; and it is therefore the worst disposition a young lady can cultivate. There is something so disgustingly unfeminine in a young lady passing jests of any kind upon others, that it always gives me pain to see it. A retired and modest behaviour makes no enemies ; an indulgence for the foibles of others entitles us to indulgence in our turn. I know there are people to be met with, who will applaud the sallies of young persons, as indicative of future genius and abilities : for my part, I always sigh when I hear children witty or satirical upon others ; and, in general, I say to myself, How many enemies will that poor child make before he dies ! How many friends will he lose ! How many innocent people will he injure, and

perhaps ruin ! But now I hope your Papa will oblige us with the rest of the story ; I want to know whether the husband died or not : if he did, I think Henrietta must have been very unhappy !

‘ She was very unhappy as it was, I can assure you, and, overwhelmed with shame and remorse, made many protestations, and many resolutions. We shall see whether she eventually kept them or not. In the mean time, the wounded gentleman, after languishing in great misery for several days, expired : having only had the melancholy alleviation to his sufferings, afforded by Henrietta’s confession, which was communicated to him ; and the being enabled to spare his friend any trouble respecting his death, by making oath, that he had compelled him to fire in his own defence ; which was the fact. The calumniated lady, now made an unhappy widow, was thrown by her grief into a lingering malady, which,

at the end of about three years, put an end to her life and her sufferings together, and the family of the Tobins were long before they recovered any thing like tranquillity. But of all the sufferers, none, for a time, suffered more acutely than Henrietta: but it was only for a time. She by degrees resumed her cheerfulness, and ingenious in finding excuses for her own misconduct, she consoled herself with concluding, that her fault was a very venial one, and that the folly of others was more to be blamed, than her malignity. Her self-deception went so far as to imagine that every body else would see the affair in the light she did; and, as she was now of an age to be introduced into the world, she prepared to make her entrée, as elegant as possible. Henrietta was not aware that with the same measure she had dealt out to others, it was now to be meted to her-

self. All the friends of the sufferers exclaimed loudly against her in all places; and all who had been offended by her previously, joined them. The young ladies a little older than herself, actuated perhaps by a spirit too much like her own, and envy of her beauty and large expectations, never spoke charitably of her; and the young men considered her as a dangerous companion. Mothers pointed her out as a warning to their daughters, and fathers bid their sons beware of attending to what she said.

With this mass of prejudice against her, Henrietta made her first appearance in public, about a year and a half after the melancholy event I have related. Though her connexions, as well as her own accomplishments, secured her a strong party, she was sharp-sighted enough to perceive, that even the friends of her family did not treat her with that distinction and protecting cordiality she

had a right to expect. In fact, she received many mortifications, and her own conscience told her whence they arose. Mrs. Benfield gave parties, and those who attended them asked her and her niece in return; but this was only for once; Henrietta had no familiar intimates among young persons of her own rank, she had no invitations to pleasant but not large parties; in short, Henrietta had not a friend in the world.

I need not tell you that Henrietta was very proud, and her mortification, of course, was in proportion to her pride. She, who had expected to lead in the little world she lived in, found that no one was desirous to be her follower; and this circumstance, added to her desire to see something more of the country than she had yet done, induced her to request her Grandmamma to travel during the summer months, and to pass the next winter in London. To this Mrs. Ben-

field consented, they visited the northern part of the kingdom, staying sometimes in one place, sometimes in another; and had reached a small town in Oxfordshire, on their way to London, when the poor old lady, over-fatigued and hurt by perceiving the chagrin that Henrietta felt, died suddenly.

Henrietta was now in a very painful and distressing situation; at a distance from home, and without a single friend that she could request to come to her on so mournful an occasion. She however wrote to her Grandmamma's solicitor, and to her Papa, who had directed his next letters to be sent to a banker at Rome; and then leaving all to an undertaker and her Grandmother's woman, she shut herself up to mourn for the only being in the world who had retained the least affection for her.

I hope my dear children will never be able to guess what were Miss Ben-

field's feelings, or what her regret, that she had not some friend of her own sex to comfort and soothe her. She reviewed her own conduct, not with pleasure, you may be sure, but with deep regret, and the more particularly, as of all the ladies she knew, Mrs. Tobin, who could not bear the sight of her, was the one she would have sought protection from. Her regrets were now unavailing; she was compelled to return to her Grand-mamma's house, where she lived in almost perfect seclusion, waiting the arrival of her Papa, who sent word that he should not be long before he landed in England.

When he did come, a new mortification awaited Henrietta : he brought with him a wife and two little boys, so that Henrietta was now no longer an heiress, but entirely dependant upon the pleasure of her Papa : and what was worse than even the loss of her consequence was, that her new Mother was the sister

of the unfortunate gentleman who had lost his life. The representations of Mrs. Benfield, and those of young Mr. Tobin, who had seen Mr. Benfield in Italy, made a deep impression on the mind of that gentleman: he considered it dangerous for Henrietta to reside in his house with his lady, who could not bear to hear her named, and he therefore sent her down into Devonshire, to board with a respectable family. The mortifications Henrietta had suffered, did not sweeten her temper; notwithstanding the pecuniary advantages the family derived from her, they declined keeping her longer than one year; alleging as a reason, that she was very severe in her remarks, and sometimes occasioned quarrels.

She next removed to the house of two single ladies, whose brother she married. This marriage produced just the consequences you might expect: she occa-

sioned so complete a breach between the brother and sisters, that all family intercourse was put an end to. Her husband was in the army. He was ordered abroad with his regiment, and Henrietta accompanied him. During the campaign, her husband, by some unfortunate but slight omission of duty, gave occasion to his enemies to bring him to a court martial. The fault was one that almost every other officer had at times committed with impunity: yet he was found guilty, and broke. The commanding officer, when discharging the painful duty of reproving him for the last time, said, ‘And now, Sir, you may go home, and thank your wife for this; her malicious tongue has been your ruin.’ The unfortunate man did return to her to reproach her, and to bid her an eternal farewell. The rest of her life has passed in obscurity and unavailing repentance. She could not re-establish

her husband's ruined fortune, nor restore his peace of mind; and if she is yet alive, she remains a warning to all young persons to avoid ridicule, satire, slander, and detraction, as well on account of their fatal effects here, as of their still more fatal consequences hereafter.'

CHAPTER XIX.

THE following day Mrs. Russell took her children to say adieu to some of their young friends, before they left town, and among the rest she called upon the Aunt of Miss Medlar. Edward blushed a little when he saw Miss Medlar; but, recovering himself from the sort of confusion he felt, he behaved with great politeness and attention to that young lady; who made some very polite and

agreeable observations about the ball. 'Being a good deal heated,' said she, 'I was under the necessity of depriving myself of the pleasure of dancing with my old partner; but I knew that you would excuse me, and not attribute my refusal to whim. You know I was your little Mamma at the first ball Mrs. Russell gave us, when you were just four years old. Do you recollect it, Mrs. Russell?'

"Indeed I do, my dear, with a great deal of pleasure, for you very good humouredly guided my little poppet through the mazes of the dance, to the admiration of every body."

'I am sure I was very happy. I have this moment finished a purse, Mary, will you oblige me by accepting it? It is not very strong, but it will do for card-money this Christmas.'

Mary thanked Miss Medlar, but told

her that she would use it to put charitable-money in, instead of card-money. Mary then asked her Mamma if she might mention Mrs. Welland, and Mrs. Russell giving leave, Mary, in a very artless, pleasing manner, told how glad Mrs. Welland would be of purchasers for her work, or of work to do. Miss Medlar's Aunt said that she would not forget Mrs. Welland whenever an opportunity of serving her presented itself. Mary's countenance testified her joy at the success of her application; and was brightened up with an additional smile, when the good lady, taking a bank-bill from her pocket, presented it to her little friend, and said, 'As you mean Amelia's purse to contain balm for the poor, put this in, my love, for your *protégée*, Mrs. Welland. I don't like to think that any body should want roast beef and plum pudding at this joyful season.' Mary

almost wept for joy ; she felt richer than she had ever been before ; and when her Mamma left the house, she begged that she might go and give it to Mrs. Welland. To this, however, Mrs. Russell would not consent, but she promised her that she should have an opportunity of presenting it to Mrs. Welland before she left town. The next person Mrs. Russell called upon, was Lady Swallow, who received her with great politeness, though in a manner somewhat formal. Poor Edward felt inclined to blush again, and he almost fancied that her ladyship must know of his impertinence. In the course of conversation, her ladyship observed, that her son said he had not passed an evening so pleasantly as that at Mr. Russell's since they came to town, and that he mentioned the young people with every possible commendation. Edward's conscience again smote him,

and he could not avoid confessing to himself, that young Swallow's behaviour was much more amiable than his own. Mrs. Russell, knowing that Lady Swallow had frequently commissions from country friends, took an opportunity of mentioning Mrs. Welland, and her ladyship said she would give her an immediate order to work something for her niece. 'Indeed, Madam, to own the truth, we are about to have a marriage in the family, and if your *protégée* pleases me, I think I can furnish her with work enough to enable her to employ one or two other persons in her service. If you please, she may call upon me this evening at nine.' Mrs. Russell promised that she should, and, as she was next going to a linen warehouse, she sent her footman to inform Mrs. Welland of the circumstance.

At the warehouse Mrs. Russell bought

what was necessary for the young Wel-lands. She then drove to a preparatory school, to which she had been recommended, and made an agreement for the reception of the little boy the next day but one. All this gave the children infinite pleasure; their little hearts were dilated with benevolence and joy, and they returned home in the highest glee. Here a new pleasure awaited them: Mr. Russell had taken places at Drury Lane, and the party, consisting of his own family and the young Nugents, set off in high spirits to enjoy a comedy and a pantomime, which, however, Edward declared he did not like nearly so well as the horses at Astley's. After a most joyous evening, the young people returned, much tired, and slept till a late hour next morning.

CHAPTER XX.

NEVER perhaps did a happier family than Mr. Russell's meet at breakfast, where the conversation turned on the events of the preceding day, and the pleasures of the preceding evening. Mr. Russell did not fail to draw useful maxims, or hints, from what passed; and he was much pleased with Edward for voluntarily informing him of the self-reproaches he had on comparing his own behaviour with that of Miss Medlar and Mr. Swallow. After breakfast the children were dismissed to prepare their own little packages of books, dolls, and shells, to be ready for their journey; and they had not done till dinner-time. Mrs. Russell came in while they were at dinner, and informed Mary that she had seen

Mrs. Goodchild, who had kindly consented to permit Miss Hanway to stay a fortnight with them in the country; and that she had brought the young lady home with her. Mary felt a little awkward on recollecting the manner in which she had spoken of Miss Hanway, yet was very glad to hear that she might have an opportunity of shewing her parents that she was not, like Henrietta, hard-hearted and cruel. She found Miss Hanway with her Papa, who, in presenting them to each other, said, ‘Your worthy father, Miss Hanway, was my friend, and I trust that when Mary shall merit such a distinction, you will honour her with your friendship. Gentleness and candour she will learn to value, from seeing how amiable they are in you.’ Miss Hanway had hardly time to make an answer to so kind a speech, before Mrs. Welland and her two children

made their appearance. The poor little dears wept at the thoughts of parting from their tender Mother; but they were somewhat pacified, when Mrs. Russell promised them that in a fortnight's time they should see their Mamma again. Mrs. Welland took her leave, full of gratitude to her benefactors, and with Mrs. Medlar's note to console her; and, as she hastened home to her two remaining treasures, she could not help admiring the providence of the Almighty, who thus produced good out of evil. She began her business under good auspices, and I am happy to inform my young readers, that she has now several women employed under her.

On the following morning the whole family set out for the Hall, and a more satisfied party could hardly be seen. Mr. and Mrs. Russell were satisfied that the occurrences of the last few weeks had left lasting and useful impressions on the

minds of their dear children, and sanguinely hoped that they should hear no more of little low spite or sneering observations upon young companions. The children were in raptures at the thoughts of their little sisters and their *own* home, as they called it; and Miss Hanway was cheered with the kind manner of her new friends. As to the little girl, she soon became amused with every thing she saw, and but seldom mentioned her Mamma. It is not for me to describe the joy there was when the carriages drove up the avenue, or the noddings and callings, and clapping of hands, before the young people alighted; or the embracing and kissing, and jumping and skipping, there was afterwards: should I attempt it, I might prevent sleep for an hour or two, which I am not inclined to do this cold night. I am sure those of my young readers who have had the enjoyment of such a happy meeting, will

acknowledge how impossible it is to tell all the little particulars : it is sufficient to state, that there was abundance of love, and joy, and mirth ; that even the unpacking of presents was delayed till the next morning, as the tongues afforded ample occupation ; and that the nursery-maid complained that the little ladies would hardly stand still to be undressed. The next day the joy was renewed again, and the dolls were brought out, and the grotto was produced, amidst universal acclamation. What gave particular pleasure to Edward, was a writing-box which he found in his room, when he got up, and for which he was indebted to his dear Mamma, and his own self-denial. The first use he made of it, was to write a letter upon it to his kind Mamma, which letter pleased her exceedingly.

Mary's grotto adorned the nursery, and was viewed with wonder and admiration by the little inhabitants of the

apartment: so that Mary found it was well worth the trouble after all. It is to be lamented, that the happier we are, the shorter time appears; an effect that I leave to the philosophers to account for. But so it is, as most young gentlemen and ladies (I hope all) can testify, if there be any doubt about the matter: and so it was at Mr. Russell's. The fortnight glided away like a cloud, and once more the family separated. Edward returned to school, where he conducted himself to the satisfaction of his masters; of course to his own. Miss Hanway and little Welland accompanied Mrs. Russell to town, and Mary remained governess in the study, till her Mamma's return. Since that time she is much improved in every part of her education; and grows a very fine girl. My readers will be pleased to hear that she need no longer blush about keeping her person upright: she is now as up-

right as any lady in the three kingdoms. —In the course of a few months Miss Hanway is to be settled permanently at the Hall as governess to the young people; Mrs. Russell being charmed with her ingenuousness, and sweetness of disposition. She will, I hope, prove a blessing to Mrs. Russell's family.

And now, my gentle readers, I trust that you have not read my little book without some advantage. We are none of us so good but we may mend; and to enable us to do so, we must derive profit from every thing we see, hear, or read. There are many Edwards and many Marys, too prompt to run into error; may they all be equally ready to amend, and give happiness to their best friends; no other conduct can be pleasing to GOD.

THE END.





